QUALITY PRACTICES IN TEACHING BY ACADEMICS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

CYNTHIA KHETHIWE DONGWE

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the

Doctor of Philosophy (Higher Education)

University of KwaZulu-Natal College of Humanities, School of Education

2018

Supervisors:

Dr F O'Brien

Professor R Vithal

ABSTRACT

The study focuses on quality in teaching in higher education institutions *(*HEIs) seeking to understand academics' quality practices in teaching, the influences on those practices and academics' conceptualisations of quality. Selected national and institutional policies concentrating on quality in teaching are presented to unpack the policy environment in which academics function. From the literature and the policy documents, Categories of Quality Practices in Teaching are established to assist in data analysis.

A qualitative case study methodology within an interpretive paradigm is adopted. Data are generated through interviews with nine academics and documents provided by those academics. The practices are categorised and then compared with institutional policy. The academics' conceptions of quality are analysed using five conceptions of quality identified in the literature. Further thematic analysis is performed to analyse the views of academics regarding the practices.

Findings reveal that academics prioritise those practices closest to them which relate to the classroom and to students followed by practices which relate to the institution and to peers. The reported practices are mainly in accordance with institutional policy with a few variations. Academics conceptualise quality as transformation, exceptional, value for money and as fitness for purpose. According to them, transformation means changing and impacting the student through teaching. The study suggests that there could be emerging conceptions of quality as both self-efficacy and self-identity. The study also establishes that academics construe various factors as having the potential to enhance or impede quality in teaching. Lastly, results indicate that many academics are driven by a desire to comply, rather than

being self-driven. Using neo-institutional theory concepts, the study concludes that quality practices in teaching are mainly due to multi-level isomorphic pressures, resulting in minimal improvements in the quality of teaching. The study advances a Quality Practices in Teaching Model, for better understanding of academics' quality practices in teaching undergraduate students. It is recommended that quality practices in teaching should result mainly from intrinsic motivation of academics and be based on willingness to improve quality in teaching. There should be ways of dealing with de-coupling between academics and the institutional structures driving the quality initiatives.

Key words: South African higher education institutions, quality, policy, academics, practices, higher education, teaching in higher education, universities of technology

DECLARATION

I **Cynthia Khethiwe Dongwe** declare that:

1. The research reported in this thesis is my original work except where otherwise indicated.
2. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
3. The thesis does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or any other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
4. This thesis does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:

   Their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced

   Where their exact words have been used, then their writing has been placed inside quotation marks and referenced.
5. This thesis does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the internet unless specifically acknowledged and the source being detailed in the thesis and in the references sections.

Student  **Date** 26 November 2018

Supervisor  **Date** 26 November 2018

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Heavenly father our God, thank you for your daily mercies and for continuously renewing my strength.

Dr Frances O'Brien and Professor Renuka Vithal your expert supervision and attention to detail is highly appreciated thank you. Dr Lumkile Lalendle thank you for your contribution during the initial stages of this study. Thank you Dr Tilly Moodley for your contribution in reading the policy chapters and the findings chapters.

Dr Vaughn John, Dr Saras Reddy, Dr Jaya Naidoo, Professor Samuel, Professor Nadar, Professor Ramrathan, Professor Preece and all PhD cohort facilitators at the UKZN Pietermaritzburg and Edgewood campuses, thank you for all your excellent support and advice through this challenging journey.

Dr Bongi Zulu and Dr Lihle Dlungwane your support and encouragement is highly appreciated.

To my employer for granting me leave to write this thesis.

To NRF for the grant (number 92651)

To my participants in this study, I thank you. Without you there will be no data.

To my colleagues Prof T Ngwenya, the late Prof A van Der Merwe, Dr B Dlamini, Dr D Hlengwa, Dr Parbanath, Dr CJ Nyide, Dr K Ngwane, Dr D Mzindle, Dr Thamae, Dr Z Zwane and the late Dr L Harrison for your continuous encouragement and for showing me that this is possible.

To my exceptional academic mentor Professor Paul Green, thank you for your guidance, support and encouragement.

Dr Janet Hesketh, thank you for critically reading the earlier drafts of the chapters and thank you for agreeing to proof read this entire thesis. Your contribution is highly appreciated.

To my family and friends (too many to mention one by one) for constant support, understanding and encouragement thank you. To my loving mother Mrs TE Hadebe thank you for planting the 'red gown idea' in my head. My brother Mite and my sister Belle thanks for running errands for me when I couldn't.

To my loving husband the late Mr Thulani Dongwe (who tragically passed away when this thesis was in the hands of a proofreader) for your interest in this research journey and for being my pillar of strength. Love you my Strawberry, thank you so much for persevering when I was physically and emotionally away from you because of this PhD.

Amahle and Lwandle - one graduation is not enough!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF APPENDICES

LIST OF TABLES **PAGE**

LIST OF FIGURES **PAGE**

ACRONYMS

AQM – Annual Quality Monitoring

BEd – Bachelor of Education

BTMC - Basic Teaching Methodology Course

CAO – Central Applications Office

CHE – Council on Higher Education

CNAA - Council for the National Academic Awards

CUP - Committee of University Principals

DHET- Department of Higher Education and Training

DoE- Department of Education

FQC - Faculty Quality Committee

FTLC - Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee

GA – Graduate Assistant

HEEC- Higher Education Evaluation Centre

HEFCs -Higher Education Funding Councils

HEQC – Higher Education Quality Committee

HoD – Head of Department

ICT – Information Communications Technology

INQAAHE - International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education

MBA - Masters in Business Administration

MQA - Malaysian Qualifications Agency

NQSF - National Qualifications Sub-framework

NQF - National Qualifications Framework

NSC – National Senior Certificate

OHEC - Office of the Higher Education Commission

PhD – Doctor of Philosophy

QAA - Quality Assurance Agency

QEP- Quality Enhancement Project

QPU – Quality Promotion Unit

RSA – Republic of South Africa

SA – South Africa

SADC - South African Development Community

SAQA – South African Qualifications Authority

SATN - South African Technology Network

SAUT – South African University of Technology

SAUVCA - South African University Vice Chancellors Association

SERTEC- Certification Council for Technikon Education

SHEEC - Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee

TEQSA - Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency

TLQPRs - Teaching and Learning Quality Process Reviews

TQM – Total Quality Management

TVET - Technical and Vocational Education and Training

UK – United Kingdom

UoT – University of Technology

VC – Vice Chancellor

WIL - Work Integrated Learning

CHAPTER ONE: A CASE FOR QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

1.1 Introduction

The study interrogates South African higher education quality from the academics' perspectives. It focuses on quality in public higher education institutions (HEIs) in South Africa. Quality involves various higher education stakeholders such as students, academics, institutional managers, government and employers. This study explores quality practices in teaching undergraduate students in a University of Technology through the voices of academics. Academics are those who teach in higher education (Mammen, 2006), conduct research and participate in community engagement. It is important that academics believe they have a voice in conversations around quality in higher education (Kalayci, Watty & Hayirserver, 2012). Ascertaining the views of academics regarding quality in higher education is important (Mertova & Webster, 2009; Kalayci, et al. 2012) because academics are important higher education stakeholders. The demand for quality in teaching is putting many academics under enormous pressure (Mcinnis, 2000). The purpose of this study is to explore quality practices in teaching in order to obtain a deeper understanding of the practices and of what informs the practices reported by academics in a South African University of Technology context.

The interrogation of the practices and what informs the practices takes into consideration the possible influences of external and internal environments on academics' quality practices as individuals working in a higher education institution. The external environment includes the introduction of various initiatives at national level such as the institutional audits, programme re-accreditations and the Quality Enhancement Project (QEP). The QEP, for instance, is the latest initiative by the Council on Higher Education (CHE) in South Africa to focus on quality specifically on undergraduate teaching and learning in public and private higher education institutions (Council on Higher Education, 2014). Internal environments include institutional initiatives such as internal programme reviews and other quality processes introduced by the institution.

Choosing to focus on quality practices at a University of Technology (UoT) is driven by the changes which have taken place in public institutions at national level. These changes include

institutional mergers and the name-change of some higher education institutions in the country from Technikons to UoTs. My choice is also influenced by various challenges faced by the higher education sector internationally, nationally and institutionally. The focus on practices takes into consideration that quality is enacted as an organisationally-embedded phenomenon within higher education as an organisational field (Blanco-Ramirez & Berger, 2014). Higher education institutions are characterised as complex organisations (Papadimitriou, 2010). The changes and challenges at institutional and national level and the national focus on undergraduate teaching and learning necessitate a deeper understanding than what exists currently of the practices of academics and the relationship between quality and academics in a UoT context. The study is intended to establish how the policies related to quality in teaching have (or have not) influenced the practices implemented by academics. Furthermore, the changes and challenges faced by the sector necessitate an understanding of how academics explain their practices and how they conceptualise quality. In this study, 'quality practices in teaching' refers to the means and efforts put in place by academics to assure and enhance quality in their teaching.

The motivation for the study is the increased focus on quality in higher education in a context of social and economic problems facing the country. The introduction of various quality mechanisms is to make higher education more responsive to the economic and societal needs of the country (Boughey, 2007). Furthermore, institutions compete for good students. The trend is that institutions need to "fight" for each student via quality development (Puŝka, Ejubović & Beganović, 2016). Therefore, a deeper understanding is needed on whether academics, as the ones who deal directly with students, have fused quality in their practices, why they enact the practices they enact and what they understand quality to mean. The overall aim is to advance a Quality Practices in Teaching Model (informed by literature, national policy, institutional policy and by academics themselves) to promote understanding of quality practices in teaching undergraduate students.

This introductory chapter presents the background and overview of the study by firstly highlighting the challenges facing the higher education sector internationally and nationally. These challenges have resulted in the extended focus on quality globally. The chapter then discusses the increased focus on quality in the higher education sector internationally and nationally, with the national focus on quality drawing back to pre and post-democratic South Africa. This chapter further outlines the focus of the study which is important in

understanding the phenomenon being "put under the microscope" which are the quality practices in teaching. The chapter then presents the research questions and a description of the national and institutional context which are both helpful in understanding academics' practices and conceptions. An explanation of a research problem is provided in order to unpack the importance of the study. The chapter concludes with an indication on how the dissertation is structured.

1.2 Challenges facing the higher education sector which have resulted in the growing emphasis on quality

Higher education institutions globally are faced with a number of challenges, which have given rise to concerns about quality. The challenges tend to undermine quality (Feigenbaum & Iqani, 2015) and can have an impact on quality in teaching. Challenges do not face only UoTs but are amplified in such institutions as they are striving to establish new identities (Cooke, Naidoo & Sattar, 2010). The challenges are at national and institutional levels and include institutional mergers, massification, the building of world class research universities, language of instruction used in an institution and meeting the expectations of employers. Other challenges include under-preparedness of students, diverse students, low success rates, low participation rates amongst some race groups, low graduation rates and student protests. There are also challenges related to academics' conditions of service and increased workloads. In this section I discuss each of these challenges.

Institutional mergers in South Africa which took place from 2002 brought difficult encounters as there was a lot involved when merging two and sometimes three institutions. Initiated at national level, South African higher education institutions have had to deal with challenges arising from institutional mergers. The institutions merged whilst carrying different practices, resources, structures and cultures. Academics for instance had varying qualifications and varying teaching experiences. After the merger, there had to be one institutional structure and culture, shared resources and staff had to have the same work ethos.

UoTs were known as technikons prior to the institutional mergers. Technikons had a very important role to play in skills training and graduating employable graduates. The

institutional mergers meant that in some cases technikons had to merge, in some cases universities had to merge and in some cases technikons had to merge with universities to form comprehensive universities. Institutional mergers necessitated a close focus on the quality of these newly formed institutions.

Massification is another challenge facing the higher education sector in South Africa due to calls by the government to increase access to higher education. Massification is one of the reasons there is an emphasis on quality globally (Blanco-Ramirez & Berger, 2014). South African higher education institutions have large classes (Lewin & Mawoyo, 2014). The demand for higher education has increased, particularly because more learners complete their matric and foreign students come from other countries to study in South Africa. Furthermore, the student numbers will continue to increase in line with the call stipulated in the National Planning Commission (NPC, 2011). In this document there is a call to increase participation rates across race and social class groups. The increase of student numbers in public universities is aided by funding provided to students by the national government. The government provides funding in order to increase the number of students participating in higher education, irrespective of their financial situation and to transform the sector by means of redressing the imbalances of the past. The government aims to provide opportunities to individuals who previously did not have the chance to study in a higher education institution. However, this pressure from government to increase access to higher education, thus increasing university class sizes, has the potential to impede quality in teaching. The South African government has argued that improved student: staff ratios can contribute to increasing quality, throughput and success (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2015).

Massification is not a challenge in South Africa only, this is also a global concern. Higher education is witnessing a boom in student numbers (Akalu, 2016). The explosion of student numbers has been noted in Kenya (Kagondu & Marwa, 2017), in Ethiopia (Akalu, 2016), in Turkey (Acer & Güçlü, 2017; Ada, Baysal & Erkan, 2017) and in Saudi Arabia (EI-Maghraby, 2011). Enrolment expansion has also been noted in Canada (Skolnik, 2010), Cyprus (Sari, Firat & Karaduman, 2016) and in China (Jiang, 2015).

There are concerns that increasing the number of students could compromise quality (Ballim, Mabizela & Mubangizi, 2014; Martin, 2016), especially where staff numbers are not

adequately maintained (Kalayci, et al. 2012) to grow with student numbers. Having too many students is a hindrance to teaching (Mcinnis, 2000). In the South African context, it has been noted by Leibowitz, et al. (2017) that the number of academic staff remained static and has not kept pace with increasing student enrolments. Large classes in higher education have resulted in increased teaching loads, which have affected good teaching (Council on Higher Education, 2011). This growing number of students has resulted in public concern and anxiety about quality in higher education (Zou, Du & Rasmussen, 2012; Ada, et al. 2017). In the further education sector in the UK, increasing student numbers have been perceived by lecturers as causing a "serious dilution in the quality of educational provision" (Randle & Brady, 1997, p. 233). Similarly, in a Zimbabwean context, it has been noted that overwhelming numbers affect quality in higher education institutions (Garwe, 2012). Large classes pose a challenge to providing quality in teaching and adequate resources. This is because large classes "culminate in creating a distance between students and lecturers when positive student engagement and regular contact with academics is important in student success" (Lewin & Mawoyo, 2014, p. 58). Massification has meant that academics need to negotiate new expectations and identities (Chitanand, 2015) and devise various means to deal with the overflowing classrooms. In fact, massification has led to increased failure rates and attrition rates (Kadhila, 2012).

South African HEIs are attempting to develop world-class research universities while at the same time redressing decades of oppression and exclusion (Borden, 2011). This is a challenge because the expectation to develop world-class research institutions has the potential to shift focus from other purposes of higher education institutions, prioritising research if the link between research and other higher education purposes is not clearly managed. The 2003 Funding Model has had institutions put pressure on academics to prioritise research outputs and this has jeopardized the time available for teaching and professional development (Leibowitz, et al. 2017). Institutions put more focus on research outputs as they are attainable sooner than teaching outputs which are only evident when the students graduate (Leibowitz, et al. 2017). There is a continuing perception that research counts more than teaching (Vithal, 2016). Research is given higher status (Moodly & Drake, 2016) even a celebrity status (Nabaho, Aguti & Oonyu, 2016). The danger is that this increased focus on research might divert academics' attention from teaching to research (Nobaho, Aguti & Oonyu, 2016). As Mcinnis (2000) noted in the Australian context, time spent by academics on teaching varies according to the institution's profile. The focus on

research assumes that research improves quality in teaching indirectly (Nabaho, et al. 2016). The challenge could therefore be balancing efforts to improve quality in teaching and efforts to build and develop world-class research universities.

Building world class research universities is a challenge in a UoT context in South Africa particularly as these institutions previously focused on teaching in order to produce work-ready graduates. The same institutions are thus competing with traditional universities now that they have a university status but traditional universities have the advantage that they have been doing research since their inception. The focus on research might result in staff feeling they are being distracted from teaching (if there is no direct link between teaching and research).

Another challenge facing the higher education sector in South Africa in particular is the language of instruction used in the institution. The majority of institutions in the country use English as a language of instruction, with some institutions using both English and Afrikaans. When students are second or third language English speakers, they find it difficult to express themselves in writing or verbally (Toni & Makura, 2015) and this can result in low success rates and can hinder quality in teaching.

This means that black African students who are studying in HEIs are generally taught and assessed in their second or third language. Many students thus find it difficult to communicate orally and to write in English, to express themselves during class discussions, to understand lectures, to understand questions posed in assessments and to understand text. The English competency levels of students affect teaching and learning (Sikhwari, Maphosa, & Masehela & Ndebele, 2015) and is one of the factors determining quality of teaching (Suarman & Yasin, 2013).

Students themselves pose various challenges in higher education. For example, a challenge facing the higher education sector is that educators and administrators have to deal with diverse students (Selesho, 2006). This diversity has been because of students who come to the sector from different schooling backgrounds. There has been resurgence of interest in quality because of growing student diversity (Akalu, 2016). The academic ability of incoming students is a threat to quality (Pitman, 2014) since students are differently prepared for higher education (Chitanand, 2015) even if they meet the entrance requirements. The under

preparedness of students for higher education is a challenge as most students do not graduate within the minimum time for completing the qualification. Institutions have had to adapt to meet the challenges of the under preparedness of students (Council on Higher Education, 2015) which results in high dropout rates and low success rates. The low success rates impact on graduation rates and on funding since students spend more years in higher education than desired. It has been noted in the National Development Plan that funding allocated to universities has not necessarily improved academic performance and improved graduation rates (National Planning Commission, 2011). There is a national concern regarding the success rates in South African HEIs. In 2011, graduation rates were between 19-25 percent across public higher education institutions in South Africa (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2011). The low success rates and graduation rates might be linked to under preparedness of students and could be linked to quality in teaching. Success rates have been key indicators of quality in the Australian context in 2008 (Pitman, 2014) and the link between the two has been found elsewhere too (Lewin & Mawoyo, 2014).

It is a challenge that student protests are starting to become the norm at the beginning of each academic year in almost all higher education institutions in South Africa. Mass action across the country has been a national crisis (Moodly & Drake, 2016). These protests focus on issues ranging from student funding, financial and academic exclusions, student accommodation and, in some cases, policies in the institution, student enrolment practices and teaching practices. There have been student protests nationwide (which were also supported internationally), whereby students in South Africa were protesting against increases in university fees for 2016 and calling for free quality and decolonised higher education as from 2017. These protests have been widely known as the '#feesmustfall campaign' in 2015 and the '#feesmustfall campaign reloaded' in 2016. Institutions were brought to a standstill in 2015 and in 2016 (Moodly & Drake, 2016). These nationwide protests were about the affordability of South African universities and highlighted the issue of inadequate government funding. These protests posed major challenges to the sector, as a lot of academic time was lost, the images of the protesting institutions were tarnished and the safety of students, staff and buildings was put at risk. Quality in teaching was impacted as alternative arrangements to finish the syllabus needed to be made during and after these protests.

Academics face further challenges in South African higher education institutions. Academics

have been faced with changes in conditions of service, excessive administrative workloads (Melin, Astvik & Bernhard-Oettel, 2014) particularly compliance with quality assurance procedures (Kreber, 2010); increasing teaching workloads and increasing student numbers (Council on Higher Education, 2010b). Hermer (2014) argues that there is a question of maintaining and improving quality which arises when there are increasing workloads across academia. These increased demands on academics have the potential to increase their anxiety and stress levels and lower quality in teaching, consequently their teaching practices. Academics have to deal with an increasingly complex and demanding environment (Melin, et al. 2014) and are required to maintain a balance between the increasing workloads and maintaining quality. Moodly and Drake (2016) observe that academics struggle with day to day tensions in both their academic and personal lives because of high workloads, pressure to publish, teaching large classes and working under resource constraints. These struggles can impact on quality.

The need to enhance quality is felt when students struggle in the workplace (Zaki & Rashidi, 2013) as a result of not being able to adapt to the workplace and to meet employer expectations. There is evidence that graduates fail to meet the expectations of employers (Masehela, 2015) and one of the causes could be quality in teaching. Higher education institutions are expected to produce graduates who possess knowledge and skills required by employers while quality is directly reflected in students' knowledge (Cao, 2017). There are calls from employers for a higher quality of graduates (Materu & Righetti, 2010) giving rise to a need to pay attention to quality (See section 2.3). However, Strydom and Mentz (2010) found that employment is one of the factors that help students succeed when they exit before graduating because of financial challenges and come back to complete their studies.

In rounding off this section on the challenges facing the higher education sector, I refer to the comparison noted by Strydom and Mentz (2010). They compared the challenges faced by higher education institutions in South Africa to the challenges facing higher education institutions in the United States of America (Table 1). This highlights the fact that the challenges are common internationally.

United States of America	South Africa
Low pass rates	Very low pass rates (around 15 % graduate in time)
Low enrolment of minority group students	Participation rates of previously excluded Black African students around 12 %
Lower pass rates amongst low income, minority group students	One in three Black African students graduate in time**,** less than 5 % obtains a degree
Students not adequately prepared in high school	Students not adequately prepared in high school
Increased demand for graduates in the knowledge economy results in a rapidly expanding student body with unprecedented levels of diversity and large numbers of first generation students.	Widening access and an increased demand for graduates in the knowledge economy lead to unprecedented levels of diversity and many first generation students

Table 1: Challenges facing higher education (Strydom & Mentz, 2010, p. 4)

Table 1 indicates that the challenges of low pass rates, low graduation rates (particularly for black students) and under-preparedness of students are not exclusive to South Africa. These are global problems. The challenges discussed in this section have resulted in growing emphasis on quality internationally, nationally and institutionally. There is therefore a need for focusing on quality in higher education if the public is to have confidence in higher education. Quality reviews, for example, have provided publicly accessible information about institutional effectiveness (Ewell, 2010). The next section discusses the focus on quality, as quality has crept into the higher education sector in different contexts.

1.3 The focus on quality in higher education

There is increasing public and government interest in quality in higher education (Plater, 2013; Schindler, Puls-Elvidge, Welzant & Crawford, 2015). Quality assurance in higher education has become a major phenomenon (Skolnik, 2010) and an explosive phenomenon (Jarvis, 2014) worldwide and it continues to grow. This emphasis on quality and quality assurance is important as contended by Shanahan and Gerber, (2004, p. 166) when they argued that "in order to create, assure or improve quality, one must first accept that quality is important". Quality enhancement is also starting to gain momentum worldwide. The difference between quality assurance and quality enhancement is discussed in section 2.4. The emphasis on quality in higher education, whether quality assurance or quality

enhancement or both, has resulted *inter alia* from addressing the challenges faced by higher education (discussed in the previous section) and satisfying the needs of the different stakeholders who are concerned with quality.

The evolution of quality in higher education has given rise to various structures and processes internationally and nationally. I discuss the focus on quality globally and nationally by means of providing examples of structures and some processes which have been put in place which are related to quality in higher education. This is in order to locate the study in this broader context. I begin with a discussion related to the developments at international level.

1.3.1 The focus on quality in higher education (Global perspective)

The interest on quality in higher education is evident in a number of international networks and organisations that have been formed around the world. The role of the different quality networks and agencies in different countries has been fundamental in growing the emphasis on quality with some having a special focus on quality in teaching. With reference to international networks, in North America an International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) was formed in 1992. Various countries are part of the INQAAHE (MacAskill, Goho, Richard, Anderson & Stuhldreier, 2008). This network is responsible for supporting quality assurance agencies around the globe (Elassy, 2015). There is also the Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (Ewell, 2010) in Europe. Similar networks in Asia and South America (Ewell, 2010) have been identified. In Saudi Arabia there is the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (EI-Maghraby, 2011). In Africa there is a regional network called the Southern African Quality Assurance Network (SAQAN) which has been formed (Technical Committee on Accreditation and Certification, 2012).

Half of all the countries in the world have adopted quality assurance systems (Jarvis, 2014). The focus on quality started in Britain (Mertova & Webster, 2009) and was followed in countries such as France and the Netherlands. The Council for the National Academic Awards (CNAA) was formed in the UK in 1965, operating in the 1960s, 70s, 80s and 90s. Europe has the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (Sari, et al. 2016) and the European University Association (Tsinidou, Gerogiannis & Fitsilis, 2010). In

the 1970s economic factors contributed to the focus on quality in higher education institutions (Skolnik, 2010). The higher education sector trusted and is trusted with improving the economy of the country. Other examples of organisations concerned with quality in each country include the formation of the Higher Education Funding Councils (HEFCs) in England, Scotland and Wales (Colleen, 1999) and the formation of the CNAA in the UK, which was later dissolved in 1992. It was succeeded by the Higher Education Quality Council. Greece introduced quality assurance law in 2005 (Papadimitriou & Westerheijden, 2011) as well as the Helenic Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency.

In North America, there has been a focus on quality in undergraduate teaching and learning (Ewell, 2010). The earlier focus on quality in the United States was on trying to prevent 'fly-by-night' promoters of higher education from exploiting students (Skolnik, 2010). There is also the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario in Canada (Vajoczki, Fenton, Menard & Pollon, 2011) and three (Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario) of Canada's ten provinces have established their own quality assurance bodies at provincial and regional levels (Skolnik, 2010).

There have been different initiatives and the creation of national bodies aimed at improving quality in Australian higher education institutions (Mcinnis, 2000). The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) have replaced the Australian University Quality Agency disbanded in 2011 (Shah & Jarzabkowski, 2013). The TEQSA is heavily compliance based (Shah & Jarzabkowski, 2013). It undertook periodic audits and had some influence on funding (Anderson, 2006). Quality assurance agencies often have the formal power to confer or deny the authority that is necessary for an academic programme to be offered and they can dictate how the programme is to be designed (Skolnik, 2010).

In Asia, China initiated subject reviews in order to inspect quality in teaching. The reviews were later suspended and replaced by institutional audits (Teng, Horng & Baum, 2013). Other examples of the emphasis on quality in other countries are China's Higher Education Evaluation Centre (HEEC) and Thailand's Office of the Higher Education Commission (OHEC) (Sandmaung & Khang, 2013). There are also Teaching and Learning Quality Process Reviews (TLQPRs) in Hong Kong to focus on quality in teaching (Jones, De Saram, 2005; Jarvis, 2014). The focus on quality in Asia was extended in 2004, when the National Commission for Academic Accreditation and Assessment (NCAAA) was formed by the

Saudi Arabia government (El-Maghraby, 2011) and in Pakistan, there is the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (Shaikh, Memon & Shah, 2017). In Pakistan quality is becoming the focal point of all academic policies and practices (Zaki & Rashidi, 2013). Malaysia has focused on quality, by putting in place the Malaysian Qualifications Framework (Tang & Hussin, 2013). There is also a Higher Education Academic Evaluation and Quality Improvement Commission in Turkey which focuses mainly on administrative services (Ada, et al. 2017).

Quality assurance is also becoming an integral part of Africa's higher education system (Tadesse, 2014), possibly driven by a desire to compete internationally (Selesho, 2006). Another reason could be growing interest in higher education by different stakeholders (See section 2.3). Seven out of the 14 countries belonging to the South African Development Community (SADC) have well-established quality assurance systems as well as quality assurance bodies (The Technical Committee on Accreditation and Certification, 2012). According to this committee, these seven countries are Zambia, Tanzania, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Swaziland and Lesotho (Technical Committee on Accreditation and Certification, 2012 p. 157). South Africa also belongs to the SADC. There is a Higher Education Authority in Zambia and a National Council for Higher Education in Malawi. Zimbabwe has a national body called the Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (ZIMCHE) which assists institutions in improving quality (Garwe, 2012). ZIMCHE sets benchmarks in consultation with both private and public institutions (Garwe, 2012) which are then required adhere to the standards set. There is also the Council on Higher Education (CHE) in Lesotho as well as the Swaziland Higher Education Council in Swaziland. South Africa, Namibia and Mauritius also have quality assurance systems in place, with national bodies responsible for coordination of quality initiatives (Technical Committee on Accreditation and Certification, 2012). There is the Namibian National Council for Higher Education in Namibia (Kadhila, 2012).

African countries that are not part of SADC have also developed national quality bodies. For instance, during 1985 the Commission for Higher Education (CHE) was established in Kenya because of concerns about quality in higher education (Materu & Righetti, 2010; Kagondu & Marwa, 2017). Various agencies have been established also in countries such as Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia, Ethiopia, Egypt and Uganda (Materu & Righetti, 2010). The establishment of regional QA organisations shows the importance of quality issues (Elassy, 2015) and the

growing emphasis on quality in the higher education sector globally. Different countries, including South Africa, have put in place quality mechanisms. Furthermore there are plans for policy harmonisation of Higher Education in Africa at regional and national level thus ensuring horizontal and vertical articulation and mobility between programmes and institutions (Woldegiorgis, 2013). Woldegiorgis (2013, p. 15) explains harmonisation as "the coordination of educational programmes with agreements to minimum academic standards and ensuring equivalence and comparability of qualifications between and within countries".

Harmonisation includes different stakeholders looking deeply into quality in different programmes and having common standards in those programmes. The African Quality Rating Mechanisms (AQRM) has also been introduced to focus on quality in teaching and learning in the African continent (Kagondu & Marwa, 2017).

1.3.2 The focus on quality nationally (South African perspective)

There is limited literature on the quality assurance systems in the Sub-Saharan Africa context (Nabaho, et al. 2016). In this study, the focus is on a UoT in one of the Sub-Saharan countries, namely South Africa, studying academics and their quality practices in teaching, what informs the practices and how academics conceptualise quality. The South African higher education sector is no exception to the growing global emphasis on quality as discussed in the previous section. It shares the same sentiments with the rest of the world demonstrated through its formation of various structures. Only a few national higher education systems can claim to operate in isolation from their international environment (Woldegiorgis, 2013) and policies and practices should be in line with global standards (Zaki & Rashidi, 2013). The focus on quality in higher education in South Africa was elevated by the formation of the Council on Higher Education (CHE) in 1997. The establishment of the CHE and its Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) represent one of the steps taken in order to improve quality in general (Mammen, 2006). The CHE is responsible for overseeing quality in higher education (Stander & Herman, 2017) and for undertaking programme accreditations and institutional audits (Colleen, 1999). The responsibility of the CHE is also to advise the Minister of Higher Education and Training on issues pertinent to higher education and to assure and enhance quality in institutions. The preface of the

document ‘Teaching and Learning beyond Formal Access - Assessment through the looking glass’, clarifies the role of the CHE:

> *The promotion of an understanding of quality education that holds together equity and standards and the support of higher education institutions in their efforts to achieve greater equity and quality are an important part of the quality assurance work of the Council on Higher Education* (Council on Higher Education, 2010a p. vii).

The CHE focuses on the quality agenda through the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) (Council on Higher Education, 2004a). The quality assurance and promotion functions are performed by the HEQC. The scope of work of the HEQC was explained in its founding document as to “develop quality assurance framework that includes an explicit focus on the quality of teaching and learning activities, research and community service in order to deepen and extend the process of higher education transformation” (Council on Higher Education, 2001a, p. 9).

The thinking was that the CHE and the HEQC would contribute to redressing the historical disparities in higher education (Masehela, 2015) (These disparities are discussed in Chapter Three). While there is a strong focus on quality in the South African higher education context, quality is seen as a mechanism for promoting transformation in higher education (Council on Higher Education, 2008) and the main reason for transforming the sector, is to deal with historical inequalities.

The HEQC is mainly responsible for accreditations, certifications, audits, capacity development, quality assurance and promotion, providing information and liaising with international quality bodies (Council on Higher Education, 2004b). Public and private higher education institutions in South Africa cannot accredit their own academic programmes. They need to apply to the HEQC for accreditation. Statutory measures at national level, initiated by the HEQC, are programme reviews and institutional audits (see Chapter Three regarding the expectations in these measures). The HEQC thus has a right to withdraw the accreditation of any programme which does not meet its quality standards. The establishment of the CHE and the HEQC has strengthened the awareness regarding quality issues in South African higher education institutions and has also strengthened attempts to protect the general public

regarding quality issues.

Before the formation of the CHE, in the early 90s, there was no national body responsible for quality in traditional universities. The Quality Promotion Unit (QPU) was formed by the Committee of University Principals (CUP) which was later called the South African University Vice Chancellors Association (SAUVCA) and is now known as Universities South Africa. The QPU was formed to investigate quality assurance systems for universities in South Africa but not in the technikons (Kistan, 1999), as technikons already had quality structures in place at that time. The QPU was independent of any one university and it was formed to maintain and improve the quality of educational programmes (Selesho, 2006). The QPU existed from 1996-1999.

Technikons (now known as Universities of Technology) on the other hand, had their own quality assurance systems. For example, there was SERTEC which evaluated the programmes offered in technikons in a four-year cycle (Jacobs, 2000). In the 1990s there were 21 universities and 15 technikons in South Africa and quality was interpreted differently by universities and technikons (Mkhize & Cassimjee, 2013). The QPU focused on improvement whereas SERTEC focused on accountability (Sattar & Cooke, 2012). Technikons mainly concentrated on standards and compliance whereas traditional universities had a developmental approach to quality (Mkhize & Cassimjee, 2013). Both the QPU and SERTEC have been disbanded. Currently the main body responsible for quality in Universities and Universities of Technology in South Africa is the CHE through the HEQC. The formation of the CHE and the HEQC has meant balancing what the QPU and SERTEC have done separately.

Other initiatives in place at national level are the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) (now known as the National Qualifications Sub-framework (NQSF) and the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) which is the guardian of the framework (Leibowitz, et al. 2017). SAQA is administratively responsible for the NQSF. These organisations were introduced in the 1990s at national level (Shalem, Allais & Steinberg, 2004), heralding the quality assurance system in South Africa (Sutherland, 2007). The NQSF is a structure for registering qualifications at the different levels. All higher education institutions need to offer qualifications registered with SAQA.

There is an increased demand for quality in higher education institutions in South Africa (Stander & Herman, 2017). The focus on quality has further been ignited by challenges facing the higher education sector such as massification, extended focus on research, low throughput rates, high dropout rates and poor graduation rates as discussed under section 1.2. Improving throughput, graduation and retention rates is a national priority in the higher education sector in South Africa (Sikhwari, et al. 2015). It is stated in the National Development Plan that throughput rates and graduation rates need to be increased by 2030 (NPC, 2011). One of the ways to improve throughput, graduation and retention rates is to focus on quality in teaching (Badsha & Cloete, 2011). However, there is little information regarding the impact of quality assurance on teaching (Houston & Paewai, 2013). According to Jones and De Saram (2005), quality systems in a university can detract from teachers in the classroom and are perceived to be the real business of teaching and learning. Ntshoe, Higgs, Wolhuter and Higgs (2010) note that quality assurance in South Africa has encouraged a shift from collaborative teaching and research, which promotes critical inquiry to focus on input/output and performance measurement. This shift could impact negatively on quality in teaching and learning.

The focus on quality in higher education globally and nationally highlights its importance and the need for this study. There are questions regarding the extent to which all the efforts of quality assurance have actually resulted in improved quality (Brown, 2012) in teaching. The study is aimed at understanding how the various quality related structures which have been established at national level, have been manifested at institutional level through the policies put in place by the institutions and the practices of academics. This is to shed light on the extent to which the national and institutional initiatives contribute (or do not contribute) to quality in teaching from the perspectives of academics and to theorise this relationship.

1.4 The focus of the study

Quality in higher education is a critical issue because it is at the heart of academic work (Watty, 2006). Higher education institutions are judged by their performance in three areas namely teaching, research and community service (Goh, 1996; Krause, 2012). Issues of quality permeate across these focus areas. The focus on quality in all three areas is a high priority for the higher education section in South Africa (Department of Higher Education

and Training, 2015). Teaching is a core function of the institution but universities have many missions, only one of which is teaching (Ewell, 2010). In order to improve quality, it is important to pay attention to teachers (Chen, Chen & Chen, 2014). Focusing on teaching is important for the university because it provides funding (Moraru, 2012) from the government (in the South African Context) when students graduate.

Teaching in particular involves interacting with students from registration to graduation and beyond. In higher education, students obtain knowledge and competencies which they use in all areas of life (Puŝka, et al. 2016). Teaching involves the sharing of knowledge between academics and students and between students and students. Unlike research, it is difficult to ascertain quality in teaching. The importance of a focus on quality in teaching is recognized in the context of the extended focus on research. The higher education sector is often criticised for valuing research over teaching as evident in the university rankings (Ewell, 2010). However, research can contribute to improving quality in teaching. Research is perceived as the activity of greater prestige (Biggs, 2001), but the focus on quality in teaching is important as it effect on graduation rates, throughput rates, retention rates and student success rates in any institution. To some, these can indicate the most important aspects of quality in the institution. Student success can be promoted by conversations about quality (Strydom & Mentz, 2010) and researching about quality in teaching can contribute towards improvement in teaching. Quality is a major concern (Zaki & Rashidi, 2013; Mårtensson, Roxå & Stensaker, 2014) and has been brought into teaching and learning (Zaki & Rashidi, 2013).

Hence this study pays attention to quality in teaching, an issue that is receiving greater attention worldwide (Wei-ping & Shuo, 2010). The study focuses specifically on university teachers, referred to as academics in this study, and their quality practices in teaching. It is about what academics do in the name of quality, what they think is quality within their particular contexts and what informs what they do. Academics have an important role to play as policy actors in higher education. In Phase One of the QEP at national level, the enhancement of academics as university teachers (Council on Higher Education, 2014) is the prime focus area. Likewise, the study emphasises the role of academics as university teachers in assuring and enhancing quality in teaching. The time has come for the higher education sector to focus deeply on academics and their practices in view of the marginalisation of academics with regard to some quality processes (Skolnik, 2010). Quality has been for policy

makers, quality assurance agencies, institutional managers and quality professionals (Cardoso, Rosa & Stensaker, 2016). The voices of academics with regard to quality in teaching in South African Universities of Technology is currently not prominent and yet academics have been faced with the expectation that they change from technikon staff to university of technology staff and deal with the challenges facing the higher education sector as discussed under section 1.2. The study calls for debates on quality in teaching in satellite campuses and further encourages an inward look (Zaki & Rashidi, 2013) into quality in teaching. It provides an opportunity for academics to reflect on their quality practices in teaching and on their reflections regarding quality in teaching. This is a rare opportunity as higher education professionals seldom receive a chance to think about quality in teaching and how they can contribute to it (Feigenbaum & Iqani, 2015) being constantly busy with lectures, administrative duties and research (Chitanand, 2015). Very few academics take time to review their practices in order to improve them and yet academics' practices are a key aspect of quality. They are held responsible for the performance of the university (Watty, 2002). Thus academics in South Africa work in a challenging environment (Moodly & Drake, 2016), taking into consideration the range of challenges faced by the higher education discussed in 1.2. Ascertaining academics' views is important as they are insiders (Kalayci, et al. 2012). Their efforts are informed by their views about quality in higher education (Mammen, 2006). Hence the efforts of academics can determine the success of institutional quality processes.

It is imperative to pay attention to quality practices in teaching for various reasons. Some of the reasons cited by Henard and Roseveare, (2012) are:

- *Students and employers want to ensure that their education will lead to gainful employment*
- *Institutions need to demonstrate that they are reliable providers of good teaching*
- *To maintain their reputations, institutions need to prove that they can balance research and teaching*

The study focused on a particular UoT (see 1.5.2), where academics are expected to select and enroll students, design programmes, develop teaching materials, teach multiple classes, executing numerous administrative roles which include processing student appeals, working on timetables, setting and marking assessments, supporting students, conducting research,

supervising postgraduate students and developing themselves by means of upgrading qualifications, attending meetings, communicating with stakeholders such as employers when visiting students during Work Integrated Learning (WIL) and implementing required institutional quality processes. Taking into consideration these numerous responsibilities and multiple tasks, it is imperative to explore what academics regard as quality practices in teaching, especially because what happens inside the classrooms is usually kept confidential (Deni, Zainal & Malakolunthu, 2014) with little or no sharing of practices. The study aims to illuminate the practices, to provide insights on how academics conceptualise quality, understand the challenges that academics face in their attempts to assure and enhance quality in teaching, then theorising on the relationship between academics and quality. One of the purposes of the 'Academic Staff Promotions Policy' in the institution studied is to "provide a structure and operation that rewards scholarship (quality in teaching, strategic research, external engagement and leadership and management) and ensures continuity, relevance and fitness-for-purpose within the academic programme" (South African University of Technology, 2013b, p. 5).

1.4.1 Research questions

The study attempts to answer the following research questions:

-What do academics report as quality practices in teaching at a particular University of Technology in South Africa?
-What is the relationship between reported practices and institutional policy?
-What do academics understand quality to mean? and
-Why do academics implement the practices they have reported?

1.5 Context

Any research project is situated in a particular context which can shape and inform questions a researcher might pursue (Tietze, 2012). This study is contextualised within internal and external contexts (Rule & John, 2011). These are important as each context relates to the

other and has the potential to shape practices. The external context is the national level and the internal context is the institutional level.

1.5.1 National level – South African higher education context

South Africa is situated in the southern part of Africa. The country has nine provinces namely: Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, North West, Northern Cape, and Western Cape. Each province has at least one public higher education institution (www.usaf.ac.za), with some provinces having more than one for example KwaZulu-Natal province, Free State province and the Gauteng province. This study focused on one public university (which is a UoT) in one province. There are 26 universities in South Africa (www.usaf.ac.za). These public universities are made up of Universities of Technology (UoTs), traditional universities and comprehensive universities. Out of the 26 public higher education institutions there are six UoTs. UoTs aim to constantly link qualifications to industry's needs (Du Prè, 2009), by providing career-focused education programmes whereas traditional universities are knowledge-based and research-intensive. According to Selesho (2014, p. 296) "universities serve as a storehouse of knowledge for cultivating worker needs of the nation and meeting the needs of the community for a good and caring society". Another difference is that traditional universities offer degree qualifications at undergraduate level whereas UoTs offer both degree qualifications and diplomas at undergraduate level with most students registered for diplomas. Comprehensive universities were formed when a traditional university and a former technikon merged. Irrespective of the differences and the history of these institutions, they are subject to the same quality requirements as stipulated by the CHE and the HEQC (see section 1.3.2 on the functions of the CHE).

1.5.2 Institutional level – University of Technology context

As stated under section 1.3.2, although the CHE and the HEQC have been established and are fully functional, HEIs are still mainly responsible for their own quality in line with the HEQC requirements (Stander & Herman, 2017). Similarly, Cheung and Tsui (2010, p. 170) argue that "quality is the responsibility of the institution and it should be embedded within the institution's culture, mission, strategy, organisational structure, learning and teaching, student

support and operational activities".

The study builds on existing research on quality in higher education institutions by using a qualitative case study approach (See Chapter Five) applied to one campus of a multi campus UoT in South Africa. This is a qualitative case study in an area where the majority of the studies are quantitative surveys (Kanji, Tambi & Wallace, 1999; Mcinnis, 2000; Hay & Herselman, 2001; Cardoso, Rosa & Santos, 2013; Sandmaung & Khang, 2012; Kleijnen, Dolmans, Willems & Hout, 2013; Cardoso, Rosa & Stensaker, 2016; Kagondu & Marwa, 2017).

In this section, I discuss the reasons for choosing this UoT as well as provide the context of the selected UoT. Selecting an institution classified as a UoT has the potential to contribute to expanding knowledge about this institutional type as UoTs are relatively new institutions in South Africa. They have been in existence for just over 15 years, arising from various changes which have taken place in the higher education sector. Furthermore, UoTs play a significant role in the higher education sector and in the growth of a country as their qualifications are linked to industry's needs. It is also important to study this particular UoT as it was formed out of a merger between two technikons and it is a multi-campus institution.

The history of UoTs in South Africa is that they started as Colleges for Advanced Technical Education (CATEs) and later became technikons (Du Prè, 2010). Technikons were established in the early 1980s in order to serve a different function from universities (Kistan, 1999). These institutions strived to produce work-ready graduates through strong links with industry (McKenna & Powell, 2009). The focus in these institutions was less on theoretical knowledge and more practical knowledge. Prior to the formation of the CHE and the HEQC (as discussed under 1.3.2), the quality in the technikons was regulated by the SERTEC which evaluated the programmes offered in a four-year cycle (Jacobs, 2000). The functions of SERTEC and its dissolution are discussed in Chapter Three. Although the technikons were autonomous, the SERTEC body played a role in the establishment of a quality culture in these institutions. Actually, it has been questioned whether the SERTEC body established a compliance culture rather than a truly reflective culture of self-reflecting on practices and procedures (Vidovich, Fourie, Alt, Van Der Westhuizen & Holtzhausen, 2000) in these institutions. This is because of the technical approach adopted by SERTEC when assuring quality in the former technikons (Selesho, 2006).

Then there were institutional mergers (as discussed under 1.2) between technikons and universities. The institutional mergers were introduced in order to restructure the higher education sector in an attempt to redress the inequalities inherited from the apartheid system (Sehoole, 2005). Institutional mergers were also initiated with the motive to improve the quality of graduates (Council on Higher Education, 2004). It has been noted by Baloyi and Phago (2012) that conflicts and tensions were common before and after the mergers. Therefore, a deeper understanding is sought about whether academics rose above these conflicts and how they now focus on quality in teaching through their practices. During the time when South Africa underwent institutional mergers there were also requests from technikons to be changed to Universities of Technology in order to 'raise status' (McKenna & Powell, 2009) and to be part of the reconfiguration of the higher education landscape (Du Prè, 2010). This was after various consultations with different stakeholders. The technikons were then re-designated as Universities of Technology, in order to bring them in line with world trends (Du Prè, 2009 p. vi). Du Prè (2009) further highlights that UoTs were established to provide career-focused qualifications which specialise in making knowledge useful and in producing high quality graduates. The role of a UoT has been clarified as "to deliver appropriately qualified graduates to the labour market; they (UoTs) are therefore more closely allied to the business sector to ensure relevant curricula" (Du Prè, 2010, p. 14).

Hence, a deeper understanding on the quality practices in teaching in this context is needed and Dhunpath, Amin and Msibi (2016) argue that there is a need for more empirical research in merged institutions. The context is critical to teaching and learning (Boughey, 2011) as it can inform quality in teaching and this study attempts to fill a contextual gap. The contextual gap identified is based on the observation that studies on the relationship between quality in teaching and academics and on conceptions of quality have focused on colleges or traditional universities (Newton, 2002; Lucket, 2006; Mammen, 2006; Maniku, 2008; Mhlanga, 2008; Brown, 2010, Masehela, 2015; Nabaho, et al. 2016), with a few studies focusing on a University of Technology context. The findings in this study contribute to the body of knowledge and widen the discussion of what counts as quality practice in teaching and on how quality is conceptualised in a UoT context. There could be an exchange of ideas about practice (Healey, 2012). Patsala and Kefalas (2016) explored practices in teaching focusing on the worthiness of those practices. However, it is not known what drives practices in a South African UoT context. The study aims to promote enhanced knowledge on how

academics embrace quality and quality processes.

The institution studied: SAUT (not real name)

The study is conducted in a South African UoT satellite campus context to promote understanding of the quality practices in teaching, what has shaped what academics refer to as quality practices in teaching as well as how they conceptualise quality. The institution was formed when a former historically advantaged institution, formerly reserved for whites, merged with a historically disadvantaged institution formerly reserved for blacks. The merger resulted in the formation of SAUT, which is made up of several campuses in total. Most of the campuses adjoin one another but two campuses are over 70 km away. All the campuses are within the same province. The institution consists of several faculties that comprise different departments. Each department is responsible for various academic programmes. At SAUT there is a Quality Unit as well as an Academic Development Unit based away from the satellite campuses. Staff from these two units occasionally visits all campuses including two satellite campuses to run workshops or to conduct internal programme reviews and evaluations in the case of the Quality Unit. Given this arrangement, it is important to understand how academics embrace quality in one of the satellite campuses.

The one satellite campus which is selected for this study will be referred to as SAUT campus X. The reason for choosing one campus as a research site is that each campus has a unique culture. This is important because quality practices are embedded in the quality culture of the institution and in the quality culture of each campus. Quality culture has been defined by Ehlers (2009) as an organisation's cultural patterns including rituals, beliefs and values. In this case, quality practices could be rooted in the quality culture of SAUT as an institution and specifically of SAUT Campus X.

SAUT campus X has been in existence for some decades. It opened when classes were first conducted in rented premises. Campus X existed as an extension of part-time courses available on the main campus. These part time classes grew on campus X, because of a huge demand from students in the city, necessitating full time classes and bigger premises. Classes then moved from the smaller premises to bigger ones used by a school, then to its current premises. The current premises used to accommodate a high school (van der Merwe, 2008). Higher education students are being taught in the premises that were designed for high school

learners. Despite this background, academics on this satellite campus are required to meet the same quality expectations as other academics working on the other campuses originally built as higher education institutions. The campus has close to 2 500 students and close to 40 academics.

1.6 The research problem

The South African higher education sector has an important role in society. Currently, policies related to quality in teaching are not only aimed at improving student success, but also at solving societal problems, for instance increasing access to higher education and transforming the higher education sector. However, as discussed under 1.2, there are concerns that increasing the number of students could compromise quality (Ballim, et al. 2014; Martin, 2016) in teaching, especially where staff numbers are not adequately maintained (Kalayci, et al. 2012) to grow with student numbers. Furthermore, quality in higher education is a complex issue that has led to different interpretations. The study questions whether academics have embraced quality in teaching through their practices and whether they are implementing the policies despite the increasing enrolments. This is in light of the different policies in place at national and institutional level. If the practices are not given the urgent attention they deserve, there is a danger that what is proposed at national level, may not being taken up in meaningful ways (Masehela, 2015) by academics. The institution studied is not giving sufficient attention to the link between policy and practice particularly in terms of what the institution expects from academics and what represents the quality practices in teaching.

This takes into consideration that few academics receive formal teacher training related to teaching in higher education (Council on Higher Education, 2015). Many of them have not received training (related to teaching) prior to teaching in universities (Chen, et al. 2014). Training is currently voluntary, offered in the form of workshops, seminars, and conferences (Moodly & Drake, 2016). A few academics register for qualifications related to teaching in higher education or to the field of higher education studies offered by a few institutions in the country. These qualifications are not compulsory for one to be an academic in South Africa. In most cases, discipline-related qualifications are preferred to higher-education related qualifications. Furthermore, each institution is responsible for designing its own professional

development initiatives. There is no common policy at national level (Moodly & Drake, 2016) regarding the professional development of academics. The practices of academics do not have a common grounding in that some come with professional experience only and some with qualifications in education. Furthermore, academics learn about teaching on the job unlike other occupations where there is formal training before one starts the job.

Although there are various structures and processes introduced at national and institutional level to focus on quality, the literature tells us that there have been challenges regarding the relationship between academics and quality issues in various contexts. Research shows academics have negative views about quality (Skolnik, 2010). For example, Harvey and Williams (2010b, p. 84) noted that "for many academics quality assurance fails to be part of the everyday activity because they perceive no real link between quality and their academic work and the performance embodied in quality assurance processes". This means that there can be a problem with how academics identify with issues of quality and therefore there is a need to understand reasons behind this problem in different contexts (different countries, institutions and institutional types). This indicates that in some contexts the issue of quality is mainly top-down and the implementation of the policies appears to be ritualistic (Newton, 2002), with quality assurance in particular being met with skepticism (Teng, et al. 2013; Mårtensoon, Roxå & Stensaker, 2014). The policies related to quality are seen by academics as laws to be upheld, possibly because academics have been left out of discussions on issues of quality. Academics' knowledge regarding national and institutional quality initiatives and improvement in quality in teaching and learning in this particular context is currently fuzzy. The study addresses the knowledge gap regarding what academics regard as quality in a University of Technology context.

Quality issues have focused mainly at national and institutional level with insufficient attention paid to what is happening on the ground (Fillippakou & Tapper, 2008) concerning academics and quality in teaching at SAUT campus X specifically. A similar problem was identified in China, where there has been less concentration on teaching and learning quality (Zou, et al. 2012) and minimal discussion on the practices at the micro or individual level (Tadesse, 2014). A call has been made to unpack what is happening at the lower levels with respect to quality *"...*a call for work that can provide deeper contextualised understandings of what is happening on the ground and that can then contribute to the development of 'bigger picture' analyses*"* (Masehela, 2015, p. 160)

Another reason for focusing on quality practices in teaching is because the number of students who complete their courses is alarmingly low (Steyn, Harris & Hartell, 2014), as discussed in 1.2. Fewer students are able to complete their programs (Tinto, 2008) with only one in five first-time entering students graduating on time (Cloete, 2014). According to 'Vital Statistics' in South Africa, the low success rates are more prevalent among black students then other races (Council on Higher Education, 2015). These statistics are of particular concern at SAUT Campus X because the majority of the students who study there are black. The low success rates can be attributed to a number of reasons within and outside the control of the institution. Ramrathan (2013) is of the view that reasons for low success rates in higher education could be financial, biographical and institutional. The first two reasons are outside the control of the institutions. Factors such as structures, conditions and practices are within the control of the institution and could have a major effect on student performance (Scott, Yeld & Hendry, 2007). Institutional reasons and factors include academics's practices (Steyn, et al. 2014).

Other reasons for low graduation rates and low success rates have been identified by Strydom and Mentz (2010, p. 30) as:

> *Student related factors – for example under preparedness of students, language problems, students' attitudes to learning and other problems such as personal, social and financial*
> *Staff-related factors – for example different approaches to teaching, attitudes of academics, skills of academics, pressures on the time and energy of academics and staff being demotivated by changes in the university*
> *Systematic factors – for example course content, increasing student numbers, resource constraints, lack of support for students in adapting to higher education and a lack of recognition for teaching and academic development*

This study concentrates on staff-related factors in an attempt to provide quality in teaching and to increase student success. In a University of Technology context in South Africa in particular, academics are recruited because of their industrial background rather than their ability to facilitate learning, produce research publications and develop programmes (Du Prè, 2009).

The above three factors are not mutually exclusive. For instance, staff-related factors can be linked to systematic factors. Indeed, it is of concern that at national level "large sections of the post-school system offer a less than satisfactory quality of education" (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013, p. 8) which could also include less than satisfactory quality in teaching. It is the responsibility of a faculty or learning center to ensure the quality of the programs offered (Suarman & Yasin, 2013). This study is important because quality is a pertinent topic globally and in South Africa. The issue of who is teaching the students in higher education institutions, how the students are taught as well as attitudes and motivation of staff thus need to be prioritised by researchers.

1.7 Structure of the thesis

This Chapter has provided an introduction to the study. It presents some of the challenges facing the higher education sector nationally and internationally, which have resulted in a growing focus on quality in higher education. The chapter proceeds to discuss information on the emergence of quality in higher education globally and nationally, the focus of the study, as well as the national and institutional contexts, to highlight the importance of studying quality in teaching and the importance of the context on practices and conceptions. Finally, the chapter provides a detailed explanation of the research problem.

After this introductory chapter, a review of the literature on quality is presented. Chapter Two unpacks the origins of the quality concept and provides a discussion on how it came into the higher education sector. Chapter Two further identifies the external and internal stakeholders concerned with quality in higher education and what has been written about the relationship between each of the stakeholders and quality. The various notions of quality in the literature are discussed in Chapter Two as is the difference between quality assurance and quality enhancement. What has been documented as quality practices in teaching is presented together with a discussion on what has been identified in the literature as factors that affect quality in teaching. Chapter Two goes further to explain neo-institutional theory which is a lens used to later obtain a deeper understanding of the findings.

Chapter Three of the thesis presents the trajectory of the national policy documents around assurance and enhancement of quality. A review of national policy documents on higher education which focus on teaching is presented. This chapter also shows how quality has been conceptualised in the national policy documents.

The institutional policies of the studied institution are dealt with in Chapter Four with the aim of highlighting the similarities and differences between national and institutional policies. Chapters Three and Four further serve as context elaborators. Chapter Four in particular, discusses who is responsible for quality at SAUT focusing on institutional rules, procedures and guidelines related to quality in teaching. It presents what the institution desires as quality practices stated in the institutional policy documents as well as a description of the quality processes which have been put in place to assure and enhance quality in teaching. Categories of quality practices in teaching are presented in an attempt to identify the expected quality practices in teaching as stated in the literature, national and institutional policy documents. The categories are later (in Chapters Six and Seven) used to ascertain to what extent these expected quality practices at institutional level are reflected in the practices reported by academics in this study.

Chapter Five discusses the research paradigm and approach, as well as the sampling and the data generation methods adopted in this study. The chapter explains how data were analysed, the position of the researcher and how issues of trustworthiness and ethical considerations were dealt with in this study. The chapter ends by presenting limitations of the study.

The findings are presented and discussed in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight. These chapters address the research questions using direct quotations from the data to illustrate quality practices together with how the practices are linked or delinked from institutional policy. Chapters Six and Seven present the quality practices reported by academics. These practices have been grouped into two broad catergories based on what was prioritised by academics. Chapters Six and Seven further present and analyse the views of academics about the institution's quality processes.

Chapter Eight is a description of how academics conceptualise quality. Chapter Eight further illuminates the explanations provided by academics on what enhances or impedes quality in teaching. The chapter ends with a discussion on academics' explanations for implementing

the practices they reported.

Chapter Nine concludes the study by theorising on the nexus between the expected practices at institutional level with the data obtained in this study. The nexus between policy and practice is theorised as well as the nexus between conceptions and practices. The synergies and disconnections are discussed together with possible reasons for the disconnections. This Chapter describes the formulation of a model. Chapter Nine further elucidates the contribution of the study and proposes directions for future research.

CHAPTER TWO: QUALITY CONCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES REVIEWED

2.1 Introduction

Chapter One introduced the study and provided its focus: quality practices in teaching by academics in higher education institutions as organisations; and what academics understand quality to mean. Chapter Two, puts the study into context by presenting a review of the literature relevant to this study. Ridley (2012) argues for the need to explore the field to gain a thorough understanding of current work and perspectives in the area. The literature review helps the researcher to find other approaches to the topic (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 2011) and to situate the study within the existing body of knowledge on quality. This study is a small piece (Ridley, 2012) in a quality in higher education puzzle, focusing particularly on quality in teaching.

The literature review provides a background to the phenomenon of quality, starting with an explanation on how and where quality originated. The chapter moves into identifying stakeholders concerned with quality and/or involved in providing quality in higher education together with what the literature reveals about the relationship between stakeholders and quality.

Concepts such as quality assurance and quality enhancement, the two contested terms in the quality debates, are discussed as is the conceptualisation of quality in higher education as presented in the literature. The latter assists in understanding the conceptions of quality in the national and institutional policy documents (Chapter Three and Chapter Four) and the conceptions of quality articulated by academics (Chapter Eight) who were participants in this study. The chapter proceeds with a review of what are considered quality practices in teaching in the literature and what factors can enhance or impede quality in teaching. The chapter ends with a discussion of neo-institutional theory as a theoretical lens used to later explain at a deeper level, the relationship between the institution and the environment it operates in with regards to the introduction of various policies.

2.2 The origins of the concept of quality

The literature reveals how the concept of quality has developed over time. The concept of quality comes from a Latin word *qualitas* (Ada, et al. 2017). It has its origins in the business environment. In the early 1900s a British farmer, Ronald A Fisher, "devised a way of organising a series of crop growing experiments to determine cause and effect relationships" (Colleen, 1999, p. 08), with the idea that an effect is linked to a particular cause. The idea was that monitoring this relationship deals with improving quality. Another contribution to the origins of quality was Walter A Shewhart's statistical process control (Avci, 2017). Then there was W. Edwards Deming, a student of Shewhart and a statistician (Colleen, 1999), who continued with the work of Shewhart for a number of years. Colleen (1999) further explains that Deming is known as the father of the quality movement. Deming became popular in the 1980s for his advocacy of quality control techniques. His thinking was in organisational management, leadership and quality (Collen, 1999). His theoretical assumptions were grounded in continuous quality improvement, Total Quality Management (TQM) and in the commitment of management to pursuing these (Redmond, Curtis, Noone & Keenan, 2008,).

TQM has been a common approach used worldwide in improving quality in higher education and in other sectors, since the 1980s. TQM stresses self-assessment, peer evaluation and using performance indicators as higher education quality measures (Teng, et al. 2013). It represents continuous improvement in activities involving managers and workers (Ocham & Okoth, 2015), in the organisation at different levels but TQM deals mostly with the management of the organisation. TQM is a system that seeks to realign the mission, culture and working practices of an organisation by means of pursuing continued quality improvement (Ashworth & Harvey, 1994, p. 15). It aims to address quality holistically (Chen, et al. 2014) and has been used in most higher education institutions to enhance quality (Haseena & Mohammed, 2015). The early adopters of TQM were community and technical colleges (Kanji, et al. 1999).

One of the essentials of TQM is ISO 9000 which is a system that deals with customer satisfaction and the ISO 9001 which deals with standards which must be met. These originated in the 1980s, to be applied to any organisation in the private and public services as a way of checking quality (Aggelogiannopoulos, Drosinos & Athanasopoulos, 2007).

Although these systems (TQM, ISO 9000 & ISO 9001) were mainly designed for business and manufacturing they have been used to some extent in education (Liston, 1999), mainly for continuous improvement of quality and for customer satisfaction. The main limitation of the TQM, has been that its successful application has been found in non-academic activities but not in the core academic activities of teaching and learning (Law 2010). Therefore TQM has its own challenges if used to improve teaching and learning and in fact has had little impact on education in general because of the various factors which can influence quality (Ehlers, 2009) in the education sector.

The concept of quality branched into the education sector when TQM started being taught in schools and universities in the 1990s. Evaluations initially took place in polytechnics and colleges of further education (Mertova & Webster, 2009). In the case of South Africa, evaluations mainly took place in technikons as discussed in 1.5.2. However, the branching of quality to the higher education sector came with complications as the higher education sector deals with human beings unlike the manufacturing sector where the focus is on products. The education process is very complex dealing with many elements (Elassy, 2015), in a context where focus is not on profit (O'Mahony & Garavan, 2012; Haseena & Mohammed, 2015). Sari, et al. (2016) termed the focus of HEIs as instruction, scientific research and public service. Institutions are believed to attend to issues of quality in these three core functions. Another focus of the higher education sector has been identified by Singh (2010) as the social purpose. There are numerous debates regarding quality in higher education which is a complicated issue as higher education institutions are multi-purpose organisations.

There is pressure on higher education institutions to meet the expectations of the key stakeholders (Sandmaung & Khang, 2013). However some stakeholders tend to be given a greater voice than others (Skolnik, 2010). In the next section, I highlight what emerges in the literature on the relationship between quality and the various internal and external higher education stakeholders. The key stakeholders in higher education include people and organisations (Ada, et al. 2017).

2.3 Higher Education external and internal stakeholders and quality

The growing emphasis on quality in higher education (as discussed in Chapter One) has made the public education sector more accountable to stakeholders and has also made different stakeholders more interested in issues of quality in the higher education sector:

> *Higher Education institutions in South Africa have experienced a series of remarkable changes over the last 20 years as government sectors have sought to make the sector more effective and efficient and more accountable for investment of public funds* (Mkhize, 2014, p. 1543).

It has increasingly become compulsory for higher education institutions to be accountable to society, students and to other institutions (Shaikh, et al. 2017). Accountability has led to urgent questions of quality (Ashcroft & Foreman-Peck, 1995), in line with external and internal stakeholders' quality concerns. Researchers need to know the forces that drive quality (Papadimitriou & Westerheijden, 2011). In any institution, there are influential individuals and groups (Ashcroft & Foreman-Peck, 1995) who have different perceptions of quality in higher education (Elassy, 2015). Among those interested in the area of quality in higher education are students, academics, institutional administrators, government, employers and professional bodies (Krause 2012; Zou et al. 2012). Higher education stakeholders vary in their relationship with quality in higher education and their relationship with the institutions. This is because universities are viewed by different stakeholders from economic, societal and educational knowledge perspectives (Houston, 2008), depending on the interest of that particular stakeholder. These stakeholders can be grouped into external and internal stakeholders. External stakeholders include the government, employers, professional bodies, parents and general society. Internal stakeholders include institutional managers, academics and students in the institution. Internal stakeholders are directly connected with the situation concerned (Kadhila, 2012). An exploration of the role and the relationship between different higher education stakeholders and quality is needed in order to understand how each group influences quality practices and conceptualises quality. This next section provides a review of literature on first the external and second internal higher education stakeholders.

Government and quality

The first category of external stakeholders concerned with quality in higher education, is the government. In the case of South Africa, the National Development Plan Vision 2030 states that *"*the performance of existing institutions ranges from world-class to mediocre. Continuous quality improvement is needed as the system expands at a moderate pace*"* (NPC, 2011, p. 50).

The need identified by government on quality improvement has been recognised through the formation of quality bodies such as the CHE and HEQC and through the publication of various documents related to quality in higher education (see Chapter Three). However, there has been concern about a potential decline in academic standards as well as loss of confidence in academic quality management (Njoku, 2012). The decline in academic standards could be because of a number of changes that have taken place in South Africa. Therefore, some believe that there is now a greater need for accountability than before (Lomas, 2007) in the higher education sector. However there are various challenges which have been identified at national level (See Chapter One), for example, low student success rates, low graduation rates and high dropout rates. Low success rates raise issues about the quality of teaching that is taking place in South African universities. Quality agencies have to work with government authorities (EI-Maghraby, 2011) who put pressure on institutions to provide quality education.

Employers and quality

The second category of external stakeholders is those who employ the students trained by the higher education sector. Employers' concerns thus relate to the final product (Schindler, et al. 2015), as seen for example, in various universities in China where a high employment rate and positive feedback from employers were considered as to indicate symbols of quality (Zou, et al. 2012). Employers are able to shape the teaching that takes place in university classrooms when universities respond to the demands of the labour market (Deni, et al. 2014). Hence employers influence how the curriculum is structured in order to ensure that their labour needs are met and by responding to the demands of the employers universities can improve quality and enhance employability of the students.

However, employers are concerned that currently qualifications are not leading to meaningful jobs, as the graduates are not fully prepared for work (Plater, 2013). Hence they feel a need to suggest how teaching and learning should take place. Furthermore, there are calls from employers for higher quality graduates (Materu & Righetti, 2010) with appropriate competences. This concern of lack of competence of graduates was also noted in the Sowetan (Thursday, 17 October 2013, p. 13) a local newspaper, which noted that "varsities are producing third class graduates which are not employable". This newspaper article was referring to previously disadvantaged institutions in South Africa which seem unable to alleviate graduate unemployment in the country as they (the universities) are producing poor quality graduates. This is of great concern in the South African context because there is a high unemployment rate of above 26 %, unlike in the United States where many students do not see obtaining employment after university as a hurdle (Kneale, 2009). In South Africa, students enter the higher education sector with the hope of gaining knowledge and skills that will assist them in obtaining employment after graduating. It is concerning that employers are not satisfied with the quality of the graduates and graduates cannot secure employment after graduating. However, there is more to a graduate than what was learnt in a higher education institution. South Africa needs graduates who have been developed holistically, who meet the expectations of employers in terms of applying their knowledge in the workplace and who possess critical skills. Kettis, Ring, Gustavsson and Wallman (2013) caution that higher education institutions should not push employer agendas but should offer education based on research. This is to develop the knowledge aspect as well to develop fully the graduate attributes of a student who should be able to, amongst other things, produce knowledge. French, et al. (2014) refer to graduate attributes as graduate capabilities which are to be developed in order to fully develop the graduate not just for employment.

In addition to graduates securing employment, the education they receive in HEIs should enable them to be entrepreneurs. However, it has been noted that the mindset of people is not towards entrepreneurship, it is about immediate employability (Senthilkumar & Arulraj, 2011), possibly because the type of education provided is geared more towards employment then towards entrepreneurship. The quality of teaching in higher education sector is not producing enough entrepreneurs who can contribute to the growth of the economy.

Professional bodies and quality

The third category of external stakeholders is professional bodies (which may also be employers). Professional bodies play an important role in the higher education context (Leibowitz, et al. 2017) and have an interest in quality and a great influence on the qualifications offered by higher education institutions. They are actively involved in quality assurance (Materu & Righetti, 2010), setting, maintaining and controlling the standards of a profession, conducting quality assurance, assessing and examining candidates and registering them when they are successful (Ballim, et al. 2014). In the accounting, health and engineering disciplines, professional bodies are required to accredit the programmes offered by higher education institutions and they directly intervene in choice of content as well as on how students are taught and assessed (Wood & Maistry, 2014; Ballim, et al. 2014). They also prescribe the modules one should accumulate in order to get into the profession, since they need to be assured of the knowledge and competence levels of graduates entering the profession (Ballim, et al. 2014).

In some cases, professional bodies intervene in determining the entrance requirements of students (Tang & Hussin, 2013) influencing how institutions enroll students, structure their courses and how they teach and assess students. Professional bodies have a say in what type of graduates should be produced for a particular profession. They also regulate the practices of a particular profession as well as the code of conduct (Gwynne-Evans & English, 2014). Academics therefore, through their practices, need to ensure that they meet the expectations of the professional bodies, so that students can later apply what they learned in the workplace. If institutions do not comply with professional bodies, students will be jeopardised when they come to practise (Tang & Hussin, 2013). Professional bodies in association with the CHE can withdraw accreditation of academic programmes if the standards are not being met. Therefore professional bodies are important external higher education stakeholders with great influence on quality.

Institutions and quality

With respect to internal stakeholders, institutions themselves are also concerned with quality but similarly are faced with challenges. One is that previously, universities had students who

were “a select group of academically proficient students, admitted on the basis of their social class and cultural capital” (Essack, Wedekind & Naidoo, 2012, p. 472) where traditional lectures and a tutorials were thought to be sufficient for quality teaching and learning but this is not the case anymore (Biggs, 2012). The reality is that university classes are now dominated by diverse students who require additional support from the institution and academic in order to succeed academically. Mcinnis (2000) found that in Australia, academics felt that the caliber of students was lower than in the previous years and this is true too in South Africa. To remedy this situation there are quality assurance and quality promotion processes in place in South Africa and beyond, to assure quality and improve student success (Council on Higher Education, 2014).

Academics and quality

Within institutions there are stakeholders concerned with quality, including managers, quality practitioners and academics with academics seen as the main stakeholders in HEIs (Elassy, 2015). However, research (internationally and nationally) has revealed varying relationships between academics and quality. Anderson (2006) found that although Australian academics are committed to quality in research and teaching, they continue to resist quality assurance processes within their universities and consider quality expectations as games to be played. Similarly, Jibladze (2013) notes that quality processes raise resistance and dissatisfaction from Georgian academics and tend to promote compliance rather than improvement. Hay and Herselman (2001) in South Africa found that some academics viewed quality assurance systems as a form of managerial control. Academics perceive no link between their academic work and quality assurance processes (Harvey & Williams, 2010b). A study by Sattar and Cooke (2012, p. 381) found that “academics view quality as being outside of teaching, learning and assessment”.

There have also been tensions around quality audits (Cheng, 2009) in England. This is because of the bureaucratic processes associated with audits and because of the time required to prepare for these audits. Academics see these processes as an extra burden (Harvey & Williams, 2010b) and have lacked trust in the quality processes (Williams, 2016). Cheng (2014) has also found that academics do not find the exercise of quality evaluations beneficial to their work and to students’ learning in the United Kingdom context. Additionally, the attitudes of academics towards quality and quality assurance were negative, across the

various disciplines (Lomas, 2007; Kayalci, et al 2012) in the United Kingdom. There is a need to work on the attitudes of faculty (Zaki & Rashidi, 2013). Academics' hesitation about quality assurance is related to its perceived impact (Cardoso, et al. 2013) on teaching. If academics perceive quality processes as not being beneficial they are likely to resist the processes. However, if they view the processes as beneficial to them, they are more likely to embrace quality and institutional quality processes. It has also been found that some academics regard internal quality processes as more useful in informing the improvement of teaching as compared to institutional audits (Cheng, 2009). Hence, there are different reactions within the academic communities regarding quality and quality processes (O'Mahony & Garavan, 2012).

Another view held in the literature is that quality assurance processes are normally introduced for accountability and control purposes rather than for enhancement and have failed to address issues of educational quality (Law, 2010). This leads to academics perceiving quality processes as being compliance related (Mkhize & Cassimjee, 2013), rather than being for improvement. Along the same lines, Borden (2011) explains that one answer we often hear from academics regarding their implementation of quality practices is 'because we have to'. According to Rosa, Sarrico and Amaral, (2012), it is important for higher education to have purposes for quality assessments in higher education other than compliance only.

Quality processes also raise issues of academic freedom (Luckett, 2007; Taylor, 2009) amongst academics and are viewed from the point of assaults on academic freedom and institutional autonomy (Singh, 2010) and as external interference (Cheung & Tsui, 2010). This means that some academics see quality processes as intrusive (Harvey, 1997). The Quality Units can be regarded as intruders who have come to 'check on' academics rather than as colleagues. It has also been noted that, in developing countries in particular, there are challenging obstacles to the acceptance of quality (Harvey & Williams, 2010a) which have led to negative reactions towards quality. On the other hand, another example of a study conducted in this area is that of Saarinen (2010) who found that quality has moved from being a controversial concept to being part of everyday language. Hence, academics have varying views regarding quality processes and are greatly influenced by the policies and culture in the institution.

Academics as internal higher education stakeholders have different views about quality. One

of the factors that influence how they relate to quality can be organisational culture. Culture simply means how we do things around here (Scott, 2013), referring to informal aspects of organisations rather than their official elements (Bush, 2011). Informal elements include values, beliefs, norms, meanings, and ceremonies (Bush, 2011). These should be shared and accepted among stakeholders and all stakeholders need to be involved (Gvaramadze, 2008). The values related to quality in particular need to be shared by different levels in the institution in order for different stakeholders to have a shared view about quality. However, Law (2010) states that the overall quality culture within most post-secondary education systems worldwide tends to focus more on accountability than on improvement. The quality culture in an institution can thus influence how academics respond to quality initiatives. The requirements of a quality culture are a visionary and strategic leadership at the top of the university complimented by bottom-up inclusion of different stakeholders (Gvaramadze, 2008). If the culture of the institution promotes compliance, academics will be strong on compliance. If the culture promotes improvement, academics will emphasise improvement. In the South African context, institutional cultures have not changed much after the 1994 democratic elections in South Africa (Mokhele, 2013). This might have an impact on the relationship between academics and quality. To promote a shared institutional culture Ehlers (2009) argues for developing of an organisational culture based on shared values, necessary competencies and new professionalism.

Students and quality

Students, have to make decisions regarding the choice of a higher education institution. According to Tang and Hussin (2013), quality is one of the factors that people would look at when choosing a university. "Quality has become a competitive weapon for the institutions to serve and attract their primary customers which are the students" (Senthilkumar & Arulraj, 2011, p. 61). Students' decision on a higher education institution clearly involves parents and together they consider, amongst other things, the quality in teaching in that institution. Students associate quality with: the institution and the course they completed (Schindler, et al. 2015); their levels of satisfaction about their experience of studying in a particular institution and quality in teaching and learning as it affects student satisfaction (Suarman & Yasin, 2013). Quality in teaching can also affect student success and retention. Therefore external and internal quality assurance initiatives serve the important purpose of protecting

parents and students. There is a lot at stake when sending a student to a higher education institution and this is a unique opportunity (Cheung & Tsui, 2010). In a higher education institution, students acquire knowledge and skills which are to last for the rest of their lives. The quality in teaching at undergraduate level, for example, lays a foundation for the future of the student hence the interest by students about issues of quality.

The discussion will now move on to clarify the difference between quality assurance and quality enhancement. These two terms foreground all discussions of quality in higher education (Williams, 2016).

2.4 Quality enhancement and quality assurance

Quality management is a term that is used to include a number of elements such as quality assurance, quality support, quality development and enhancement and quality monitoring (Council on Higher Education, 2004b). Quality management can also be linked to quality conceptions of teaching staff (Kleijnen, et al. 2013). Therefore, quality management includes the entire quality process in different areas including teaching.

Quality initiatives are likely to involve elements of enhancement and assurance (Lomas, 2007). According to Filippakou (2011) these are the two dominant discourses of quality which influence how quality is interpreted. These concepts are widely used in higher education institutions (Elassy, 2015) and have been part of the language in higher education in the recent years (Lomas, 2007). An in-depth understanding of the differences between these two terms is important, especially because in South Africa quality enhancement is being added to the current quality assurance initiatives at national level (see Chapter Three). Quality assurance and quality enhancement are two distinct activities (Williams, 2016) and these penetrate all areas of higher education (Filippakou, 2011).

Quality enhancement is prospective (looking ahead) with the main aim being improvement. Biggs (2001) explains that quality enhancement should be about improving current practice and getting teachers to teach better. It is also about improving the individual student or individual academic. It is less bounded and it provides a more interpretative space (Filipakou & Tapper, 2008) than quality assurance. Quality enhancement should be more acceptable to

academics than quality assurance (Bamber & Anderson, 2012) as it focuses on improvement rather than accountability. Quality enhancement is more bottom-up, instilling in every member of staff the desire to improve quality and giving them the time, the incentive and the means to actually improve quality (Mkhize & Cassimjee, 2013). Mkhize and Cassimjee (2013, p. 1274) further state that in quality enhancement, "academics have the potential to improve their practices on their own accord". Quality enhancement is concerned with the teaching and learning process and gives more space to academics than quality assurance which gives more space to administrators (Elassy, 2015). It puts the responsibility on academics rather than on administrators.

Quality assurance on the other hand, is about evaluating performance and accountability in higher education with policies being about power and control (Kistan, 1999). "Quality assurance is retrospective (looking backwards) with the main aim being accountability, a top down approach" (Biggs 2001, p. 222) and examining what happened in the past (Plater, 2013). It is about making judgements against defined criteria (Filippakou & Tapper, 2008). It implies that quality can be measured easily by using a checklist (Elassy, 2015). Thus the aim is to ascertain whether those particular criteria have been met or not. The agenda is managerial rather than academic (Elassy, 2015) and it is entrepreneurial (Biggs, 2001). Quality assurance in higher education institutions according to Materu and Righetti (2010, p. 10) involves:

> *Screening of candidates for admission, staff recruitment and promotion procedures, curriculum reviews, teaching and learning facilities, quality of research, policy development and management mechanisms, student evaluation of staff, external examiners for end of semester or end of year examinations, tracer studies and academic reviews and audits.*

Quality assurance is "a mode of evaluating rather than being a dialogic mode about improvement" (Blackmore, 2010, p. 390). Quality assurance is top down and bureaucratic (Biggs, 2001). It has been noted that most quality systems are management driven and do not take into account the human aspects (Mertova & Webster, 2009). Quality assurance is about, evaluation, compliance and meeting standards while quality enhancement is about development and capacity building. Quality assurance is about putting in place a quality management system for teaching and learning which must be updated and upgraded regularly

(Daud, et al. 2011). Quality assurance is a process through which a higher education institution tries to guarantee its stakeholders that its learning, teaching and other services will consistently reach a standard of excellence (Shaikh, et al. 2017). It is "a process of ensuring that minimum standards (or requirements) are in place, adhered to and improved on a regular basis" (Technical Committee on Accreditation and Certification, 2012, p. 169). Quality assurance is a procedure for indicating superiority, responsibility and significance for money (Shaikh, et al. 2017).

Blackmore (2004) has argued that quality assurance seems to be distanced from and working against improving quality in the Australian context. Likewise, Mkhize and Cassimjee (2013, p. 1267) caution that "quality assurance could even damage quality because it can divert people away from quality enhancement". Additionally, quality assurance is pervasive (Skolnik, 2010), associated with constant checking and thereby infringing on academics' space.

There has been a recent incorporation of quality enhancement in the existing quality assurance initiatives in South Africa. Initiatives such as national programme accreditations and institutional audits are discussed in Chapter Three. The incorporation of quality enhancement has been evident with the introduction of a Quality Enhancement Project (QEP) project in 2014. This project is discussed in more detail in Chapter Three. In the introduction of the QEP project, Grayson (2014, p.9) states that "it is hoped that that there will be a culture of quality enhancement embedded in the institutions' thinking, strategies and practices". During the write up of this thesis, Phase One of the QEP project was completed. The CHE produced an analysis of the institutional submissions in a document called 'Content Analysis of the Baseline Institutional Submissions for Phase One of the Quality Enhancement Project' (Council on Higher Education, 2015). In this document, institutions reported what they consider as successful and unsuccessful practices at institutional level (Council on Higher Education, 2015, p. 15) with regards to improving quality in teaching. The QEP project is intended to be inductive and iterative in nature and to enhance the entire higher education system as whole, not just individual institutions (Grayson, 2014).

It will thus be interesting to ascertain whether academics have embraced quality enhancement in their practices and in their understandings of quality. The discussion will now move into how quality in higher education has been conceptualised in the literature.

2.5 Conceptions of quality in higher education

Quality is a term that is loosely associated with something good, for example, quality vegetables, quality kitchens, quality beds. The term may be linked to high standards, consistency and specifications which must be met (Essack, et al. 2012). It refers to products or practices. Quality can be defined as compliance with standards (Ada, et al. 2017). On the other hand, quality could be stakeholder-driven (Harvey & Green, 1993; Schindler, et al. 2015). The stakeholder-driven definitions of quality vary according to the interests and priorities of different stakeholders (Kleijnen, et al. 2013; Skolnik 2010) and in different contexts (Dube, 2011). In the higher education sector, quality could be defined differently by students as compared to employers. Quality could be defined differently from country to country and from one institutional type to the other. "The complexity of higher education also increases the difficulty in conceptualising quality" (Cheng, 2014. p 273) and the notion of quality remain as elusive as ever (Ntshoe, et al. 2010). According to Tam (2001) quality is highly contested and is linked to how higher education is perceived. Quality in higher education is also equated to success (Gidley, Hampson, Wheeler & Bereded-Samuel, 2010) while success is linked to ensuring that students registered in higher education perform well and complete their qualifications in minimum time.

As a foundation for understanding the concept of quality, we need to first understand the diverse explanations and interpretations by different authors. There are diverse explanations and interpretations of the term quality in higher education (Goh, 1996; Gvaramadze, 2008; Harvey and Williams 2010a; Skolnik, 2010; Borden 2011; Maguire and Gibbs 2013; and Cheng 2014). The multi-perspective nature of quality is also noted by Borden (2011) who states that there is variety of opinion regarding what can be termed as quality in post-secondary education. There are multiple discourses of quality (Filippakou, 2011), making it difficult to define quality (Haseena & Mohammed, 2015). Indeed there is no agreed definition of quality (Brown, 2012) as "quality constitutes a wicked ill-defined problem" (Krause, 2012, p. 285). Quality in higher education has many facets (Harvey & Williams, 2010a) and the definitions of quality normally result in circular arguments (Lucket, 2003).

Despite the lack of agreement regarding the notion of quality, awareness of existing

definitions in the literature is important (Schindler, et al. 2015). Various authors have attempted to provide conceptualisations of quality in higher education (Harvey & Green, 1993; Melrose, 1998; Tam, 2001 and Cheng, 2009). In their seminal work, Harvey and Green (1993), offer five conceptions of quality in relation to higher education: quality as exceptional, quality as perfection, quality as fitness for purpose, quality as value for money and quality as transformation. These five conceptions are compatible and interchangeable rather than being mutually exclusive (Green, 2013), sometimes even overlapping (Watty, 2002). In the following sections I discuss each of these five conceptions.

2.5.1 Quality as exceptional

This conception of quality refers to something excellent, outstanding and unique. This can be linked to what Dew (2009) termed as luxury and prestige. For example, if the institutions invest in their appearance**,** having garden-like campuses and excellent teaching facilities, the institution can be considered to be of good quality. Quality as exceptional is something that is elitist and is easily recognisable because this notion of quality exists on the basis of reputation (Webbstock, 2008) and public image (Shanahan & Gerber, 2004). Quality as exceptional refers to something special (Mammen, 2006) and distinctive (Watty, 2002).

This notion has to do with impression management and how the institution is viewed by external stakeholders. Shanahan and Gerber (2004) further state that this notion of quality can lead to a person encouraging friends or family members to use that particular institution as it refers to intrinsic goodness which can be appreciated by different stakeholders. For example, Steyn, et al. (2014) note that students select an institution based on its national reputation as a prestigious institution. This is an example of students conceptualising quality as reputation. The destinations of graduates are also prime indicators of the reputation and the acceptance of the programmess of the institution in the labour market (El-Maghraby, 2011). Quality as exceptional focuses on the resources the institution has and on the image of the institution from the outside. Shanahan and Gerber (2004) referred to quality as where physical resources and human resources are sufficiently strong, linking quality and resources. This notion of quality as exceptional also focuses on the number of years the institution has been in existence. This has been referred to by Dew (2009) as endurance: the older the

institution the more it is perceived as offering quality.

2.5.2 Quality as perfection

This conception of quality refers to quality as something that is error free and flawless. It is zero defects (Watty, 2002). This notion links mostly to the manufacturing sector whereby the product is checked numerous times for faults until it is near-perfect and it conforms to specifications and meets standards. Quality as perfection is about getting it right the first time and every time (Mammen, 2006).

Lim (2001) has provided one of the definitions of quality as a way of producing perfection through continuous improvement by adopting Total Quality Management (TQM). Continuous improvement mostly refers to staff and how staff perform their duties (Dew, 2009). This notion of quality as perfection also refers to quality as conformity (Dew, 2009). This means that some institutions and staff working in higher education institutions conform to quality requirements only because they are expected to do so. Therefore, this notion of quality encourages compliance.

Quality as perfection may be suitable for administrative processes in higher education but not for the academic sector (Luckett, 2006). The unsuitability of the notion of quality as perfection in academic activities and in higher education in general was also noted by Kalayci, et al. (2012). This conception relates more closely with the manufacturing sector than with the education sector.

2.5.3 Quality as fitness for purpose

The notion of quality as fitness for purpose deals with the extent to which internal processes and practices allow an institution to achieve what it defines as its purpose (Masehela, 2015), product or service (Lim, 2001). This is the purpose defined by the provider (Watty, 2012). The conceptual understanding of quality as fitness for purpose is similar everywhere (Tadesse, 2014). It is about whether a product or a service meets the specifications or the mission of the institution (Webbstock, 2008 p, 267). Thus it has been observed that most institutions adopt the instrumental approach to quality which sees quality as something that

fits its purpose (Lim, 2009). This conception of quality as fitness for purpose has been adopted by most policy makers in the higher education sector (Elassy, 2015) as it accepts that quality itself has no predefined meaning. It depends on the purpose for which a particular process is designed. Quality is thus taken to be mystical (Blanco-Ramirez & Berger, 2014) as it is rarely clear what the purpose is and what constitutes fitness (Houston, 2008). In the South African context, this is the notion that is widely adopted by the HEQC through its various policy documents (see Chapter Three). This notion of fitness for purpose is also linked with quality as accountability.

Quality as fitness for purpose has also been adopted by some institutions through their policies, for example the institution used here as a case study (see Chapter Four). While quality as fitness for purpose is widely used in higher education, there is tension between quality and the purpose of the institution. This could be because of the leeway provided to institutions to decide on their own, their mission and vision of the institution. The institution needs to pitch the purpose at an appropriate level (Dube, 2011). Stakeholders concerned with quality as fitness for purpose could be internal and external stakeholders.

2.5.4 Quality as value for money

This conception of quality as value for money has a business focus and aims to satisfy the customer. It is concerned with 'return on investment' (Mammen, 2006), about measuring outputs against inputs (Watty, 2002). It focuses on the relationship between price and quality offered (Shanahan & Gerber, 2004; Lim, 2001). In this notion, quality is taken as the ability to provide value for money and accountability (Lim, 2001). Both internal and external stakeholders are concerned with this notion of quality as value for money. Quality as value for money is about satisfying the demands of public accountability (Biggs, 2001). Quality as value for money refers to maintenance of standards whilst lowering costs, performance indicators and customer focus (Kayalci, et al. 2012). Parents, students and society are constantly searching for value for money (Goh, 1996). The recent #feesmustfall protests are example of a call from students for the lowering of costs while offering quality. This conception of quality as value for money is a multi-faceted principle (Symes, 2006) as it focuses on both sides of the coin and includes an economic view of quality which is corporate related and is customer oriented (Zaki & Rashidi, 2013).

The challenge is keeping the balance between offering quality in teaching and value for money, given the diverse teaching needs in the higher education sector. Another challenge is lowering costs without lowering quality. This conception of quality puts the customer first which is a challenge in teaching in that it creates an impression that staff are expected to keep students satisfied (Feigenbaum & Iqani, 2015) and it poses the question of whether a student is the customer or the product or both? (Elassy, 2015).

2.5.5 Quality as transformation

This conception of quality is concerned with transforming, developing, altering and empowering the student. It is about bringing about change (Mammen, 2006) and doing something to the student (Watty, 2002) with the student and for the student. When quality is understood as transformation, the student benefits (Pitman, 2014). Shanahan and Gerber (2004) refer to this conception as value added, where staff need to be trained to be problem solvers and to be able to assist students from enquiry to graduation and beyond. Dew (2009), describes the notion of quality as transformation as value added. He describes it as students growing in different areas before they graduate from a particular institution. Therefore, if quality is conceptualised as transformation, it means the reform and the change of a student from one state to another (Corder, Horsburgh & Melrose, 1999). It is about changing "*ice into water*" (Harvey, 1997). It is about qualitative change (Harvey, 1997; Kalayci, et al. 2012). This notion of quality as transformation refers to the ability to transform students on an on-going basis and to add value to the knowledge and personal development of the student (Lim, 2001) thus resulting in what we understand by an educated citizen (Symes, 2006). This conception hence values the difference between an educated citizen and a non-educated citizen. It focuses on concepts such as enhancing and empowering.

This conception of quality as transformation does not only relate to students but also to staff and to both internal and external stakeholders. Quality as transformation is concerned with the before and after of students and staff, through higher education. It refers to how the individual as a person can be transformed through his or her experiences in higher education (Masehela, 2015). It is a process whereby individuals (learners, students, academic and administrative staff) change their perceptions and worldviews (Gvaramadze, 2008).

Universities engage with transformation in a variety of ways to transform the structures, university culture, curriculum, staff and students. However Cheng (2014) notes that there has been little research on how quality as transformation can be applied in educational practice. This calls for research on quality as transformation with particular reference to quality in teaching.

Quality as transformation in the South African context is mostly driven by political agendas and the aim is to respond to societal issues by means of redressing the imbalances of the past. The notion of quality as transformation in South Africa refers to redress, equity and access (Akojee & Nkomo, 2007). It is the state's transformation agenda (Luckett, 2007). This refers to the need for racial balance in the South African higher education sector. The meaning of transformation in the South African higher education context provided by the former Minister of Higher Education and Training Dr Blade Nzimande in his 2015 budget speech is that:

> *There remains an urgent need to radically change the demographics of our professoriate; transform the curriculum and research agendas; cultivate greater awareness of Africa; eliminate racism, sexism and all other forms of unjust discrimination; improve academic success rates; and expand student support* (Nzimande, 2015, p. 2)

2.6 Quality practices in teaching as reviewed in the literature

Having discussed how quality has been conceptualised in the higher education sector, I now move on to quality practices in teaching as documented in the literature. As discussed in Chapter One, quality practices in teaching are the main interest of this study. Quality practices refer to the means and efforts put in place by academics in order to assure and enhance quality in teaching. This includes efforts to demonstrate and evaluate quality (Blanco-Ramirez & Berger, 2014): "To have quality, one has to put in good efforts" (Goh, 1996, p. 188). What counts as quality in teaching (Ashcoft & Foreman-Peck, 1995) and as quality practices in teaching as documented in the literature is the focus in this section.

Little thought has been given to what constitutes quality teaching and learning (Martens & Prosser, 1998). That is why it is important to unpack what is associated with quality in

teaching in the literature. In spite of the emphasis on quality, quality in teaching is still hard to define (Moraru, 2012). Therefore unpacking quality practices in teaching will yield a better understanding of what can be associated with quality in teaching. A lack of attention to the quality practices in teaching, might lead to institutions not achieving the required improvement in quality despite a noticeable growing emphasis on quality worldwide, as discussed in Chapter One.

People working within universities are carriers of practices (Saunders, 2012). In this study, academics in particular are taken to be carriers of practices. Quality practices in teaching as identified in the literature can be linked to teaching, designing the programme, assessing students, supporting students, enrolling students, developing professionally, conducting student evaluations, peer evaluating and reviewing and evaluating programmes. In the following sections, I discuss each of these practices.

2.6.1 Teaching students

Killen (2010) in his book titled *Teaching strategies for quality teaching and learning*, which is aimed at various educational contexts, argues that a teacher must employ suitable teaching strategies as a foundation for quality. Killen puts forward practices such as using direct instruction, discussions, small-group work, co-operative learning, problem solving, learner research, role play, and using case studies as teaching strategies linked to quality. Focusing on teaching strategies puts emphasis on what the lecturer does (with and for students) in order to assure and enhance quality. Pavlina, Zorica and Pongrac, (2011) categorise university teachers as falling into three categories; the first being an expert, which includes the ability to demonstrate good knowledge of the subject matter and to answer questions as an expert. The second category is a competent university teacher, which includes having good structure for lecture and using modern technology. The third category concerns teachers' personal characteristics, particularly the ways in which they interact with students. The knowledge, capabilities and personal attributes of a university teacher can hence be linked to quality. With regards to demonstrating good knowledge of the subject matter, Killen (2010) is of the view that teachers should have deep understanding of the subjects they teach, feel secure about their knowledge and continually seek to improve knowledge. Academics need to maintain and develop knowledge of their subject through scholarship and constantly update

pedagogical skills possible with the latest technological aids (Senthilkumar & Arulraj, 2011, p. 74). With regards being competent in lectures, Morton, (2009, p. 59) identifies the following attributes of an outstanding lecture:

- *It is delivered in a way that is informative, interesting and engaging.*
- *The content is well organised and easy to follow.*
- *Students feel involved through active participation, use of examples which they can relate to and by asking questions.*
- *Students leave wondering where the time has gone.*
- *Students leave knowing that they have learned something and are often inspired to go off and find out more.*

Hence Morton (2009) identifies lecture delivery, organising content, encouraging active participation, and exciting and inspiring students during lectures as good teaching. Lecture delivery refers to the way the information is presented to students or as direct instruction (Killen, 2010). Teachers must have good delivery skills to help students understand and concentrate (Shaikh, et al. 2017) using techniques such as lectures and demonstrations. Another practice related to direct instruction is the effective use of examples during a lecture (Chew 2007). This means that examples which are used during a lecture must enhance the quality of the lecture and enhance students' understanding.

Killen (2010) describes some of the limitations of direct instruction as depending heavily on the teacher's communication style and presentation skills. It has been noted in the literature that there are concerns from students that sometimes there are no further explanations provided on the points displayed on the power point slides (Toni & Makura, 2015). Teachers should provide clear explanations and convey feelings of excitement and interest (Killen, 2010). Direct instruction is also linked to the content delivered. The content learnt by students in various modules should be related to real life situations (Sikhwari, et al. 2015) and it should be content students can identify with. The content should directly relate to the outcomes (Killen, 2010). The course should be rooted in research, that is, the teaching should be based on existing knowledge (Wei-ping & Shuo, 2010, p. 5).

Academics should encourage students' active participation as students learn better by interacting and sharing knowledge (Sikhwari, et al. 2015) with other students rather than

waiting for a lecturer to impart knowledge to them. Therefore university teachers need to employ strategies incorporating student discussion and sharing of ideas, rather than sticking to whiteboard marker and a chalk–and-talk method. To further promote participation, effective communication should be encouraged in order for students to learn to express themselves publicly (Mkhize, 2016). This can include practices such as oral presentations and student symposia (Patsala & Kefalas, 2016).

Active participation could also be encouraged in the form of discussions. Discussions are teaching strategies that can suit any subject at any level of education (Killen, 2010). They could include small groups to facilitate interactive lecturing (Patsala & Kefalas, 2016) or they could involve the entire class (Killen, 2010). Killen, (2010) goes on to explain that discussions could be face to face or e-discussions. Modern technology is advocated by Pavlina, et al. (2011) and considered an opportunity to encourage and force people to change their practices (Oliver, 2012), from traditional teaching methods to integrating online methods into teaching (Zou, et al. 2012). The integration of technology into teaching means that technology is used together with other methods of teaching. More importantly, the use of technology is of particular importance in a UoT context where all teaching and learning programmes and research projects should be related to technology (Du Prė, 2009). E-learning strategies include use of a virtual classroom (Patsala & Kefalas, 2016).

However, the quality of teaching using technology cannot be taken for granted and neither can the widespread belief that the internet is good quality (Ntshoe, et al. 2010). Academics need to be able to assure and enhance quality in teaching when using technology as one of the teaching strategies and should assist students to learn to differentiate between what is quality and what is not quality when accessing information on the internet. The incorporation of technology into teaching places demands on staff time with the introduction of e-learning bluring lines between professional and personal lives (Austin & Sorcinelli, 2013). These concerns are an indication that quality issues regarding the use of technology in teaching should be considered as the technology can positively and negatively impact on the life of a student and an academic.

Other strategies include the use of case studies and group work (Strydom, Basson & Mentz, 2012) as well as problem solving, research based strategies and role play (Killen, 2010). According to Killen (2010), case studies as a teaching strategy are mostly used at university

level in disciplines such as Law, Medicine and Business Studies.

In concluding this subsection on teaching strategies, it is noted that Biggs (2012) differentiates between teacher-focused and student-focused strategies. Teacher focused strategies take the teacher as the expert and a transmitter of information to the students. The focus is on what the teacher does. As discussed in this section, these are direct instruction strategies such as demonstrating the knowledge of the subject matter, continually improving knowledge, organising content, and using effective examples during a lecture.

Student-focused strategies on the other hand, focus on the conceptual change of a student and what the student can do (Biggs, 2012). Discussions, problem solving, role plays and using small groups as teaching strategies are believed to encourage active participation, collaboration, discussions and effective communication. The teacher-focused strategies and the student focused strategies are not mutually exclusive as using modern technology can be teacher-focused as well as student-focused depending on how technology is used. However the negative aspect of the student focused strategy is that it can lead to a blame-the-student theory of teaching which puts less emphasis on the academic and more emphasis on the student (Biggs, 2012).

2.6.2 Designing the programme

Geyser (2004b, p. 142) maintains that a programme is a structured set of learning experiences that leads to one or more qualifications. This structuring is normally referred to as design. Programme and curriculum design is the key focus area for quality assurance (Geyser 2004b). These design practices are the responsibilities of academics (Wei-ping & Shuo, 2010). Programme structure and curriculum structure have been identified as key factors affecting teaching and learning (Scott, et al. 2007) in higher education institutions. Academics need to constantly renew, review and revise their curricular (Chitanand, 2015), especially in a UoT context with its constant liaison with employers. Quality assurance in the curriculum in particular refers to involving academics at all levels in the institution (MacAskill, et al. 2008). Academics need to recognise this role and be involved in the process (Harvey & Williams, 2010b). This responsibility of academics in designing the programme was echoed by Stefant (2009) who maintains that planning teaching and learning is an important aspect of the role of

an academic. All those who teach need to understand the purpose and the context of the programme (McKimm, 2009).

The planning should take place before the students register in the institution. In the South African context, the programmes developed in public institutions should be in line with the Programme Qualification Mix (PQM) which is linked to funding (Stander & Herman, 2017).

It is also expected that academics when developing the curriculum do not consider only one discipline. They need to integrate other disciplines (Austin & Sorcinelli, 2013) in order to expand the knowledge base of the students. Landrum and Smith (2007) as well as Wei-ping and Shuo (2010) note that curriculum must be properly structured and well communicated to the students. Students need to be told what they will be taught, at the beginning of the course. During programme design, careful attention needs to be paid to the coherence of the programme (Geyser, 2004b). Geyser (2004b) explains coherence as different aspects relating meaningfully to others and considers this a quality issue.

The structure of the programme communicates the expectations academics have of their students (Tinto, 2012). If academics have high expectations, students will be encouraged to work hard. The modules within the programme should be planned in a manner that they contain problems and students should be asked to solve those problems (Sikhwari, et al. 2015), in the case of a problem solving pedagogy. When academics design programmes they should ensure that the programmes are interesting as this can motivate students and increase commitment to their studies (Zimitat, 2006). If students do not find the programmes interesting, they could struggle and could even drop out.

As stated earlier, programme design should take into consideration preparing students for the working world. The programmes should be structured in such a way that they equip students with appropriate skills, knowledge, values and attributes for students to enter into the working world successfully (Henard & Roseveare 2012). Employability is another aspect of concern related to quality of teaching and learning (Harvey and Williams, 2010b p, 96). Institutions need to convince different stakeholders that students are employable when they leave the institution and that they are motivated to come back and further their studies. Kettis, et al. (2013) as well as Senthilkumar and Arulraj (2011) argue that it is important for

institutions to interact closely with employers and to interact with the rest of society. The higher education sector needs to match the needs of the country thus alleviating unemployment (Scott, et al. 2007). Therefore interacting with employers in order to enhance the employability of students should be considered during programme design. However, institutions and academics should not rely only on student employability as an indicator of quality. This is because employability figures are not trustworthy indicators of quality in higher education (Harvey & Williams, 2010a). There could be other factors which can be linked to employability of a student. The programme should be designed in such a way that it responds to the needs of internal and external stakeholders including employers. Curricula should respond to the needs of the global community, local community and to the needs of the students (Mkhize, 2014). It has become an important part of higher education to meet the needs of stakeholders (Basit, Eardley & Borup, 2015). Geyser (2004b) emphasises that if the programme is not properly planned it will fail to meet the needs of stakeholders such as students and employers. It should be based on assessment of needs (Ashcroft & Foreman-Peck, 1995). Curricula should be matched with what other universities are offering and without duplicating of offerings (Mkhize, 2014). During programme design, there should be liaison amongst institutions offering the same programme.

Programme design and curriculum design should be linked to the development of intended graduate attributes. This link is identified by Sattar and Cooke (2012, p. 385) in that "renewing the curriculum, is the process of identifying graduate attributes and developing strategies to ensure that these attributes are contextualised". Therefore academics need to incorporate the development of graduate attributes pertaining to a particular profession when designing the programme. Academics are also expected to be specialists in the scholarship of teaching and learning (Scott, et al. 2007).

Jarvis (2001) questions whether university teachers are the ones who prepare and deliver learning materials, since in the schools, educators are given the material to teach from. In higher education, academics are responsible for designing the programme, compiling the learning materials starting from study guides to course notes. There should be careful attention paid to compiling study guides during programme design. This should occur before the teaching begins. In the case of introducing a new programme, study guides are compiled during the programme design stage, taking the learning outcomes from the module descriptors. Bester and Scholtz (2012, p. 289) argue that "study guides should be compiled by

subject lecturers to communicate pedagogical and organisational elements of the module to students". When compiling the study guide, the type of information included is central to the course (Landrum & Smith, 2007). However the preparation of teaching materials should be considered as spoon feeding by students (Toni & Makura, 2015), who use the material from a lecturer instead of taking down their own notes. Other teaching and learning materials to be decided on during programme design are textbooks to be used in that particular module. Ideally, there should be detailed regulations for selecting textbooks (Zou, et al. 2012).

2.6.3 Assessing students

The literature proposes that assessment of students' learning constitutes a very important element of quality (Harvey & Williams, 2010b) and is indeed part of teaching and learning (Boud & Associates, 2010). Assessments drive learning and inform teaching. Since tests or examinations encourage students to study, and the results of an assessment normally inform teaching. The purpose of assessment should be clear and assessment should be part of programme and module design (Geyser, 2004a). Decisions regarding assessment need to be taken at an early stage. Additionally, assessment should link directly to the objectives of the course (Wei-ping & Shuo, 2010). Boud and Associates (2010) state that students should be involved in assessments, for example, by being asked to self-assess and also by being in dialogue with their peers and teachers regarding the assessment processes. Assessment should also assist in the development of a range of graduate attributes which can be measured post-graduation by means of using course experience surveys and graduate destination surveys (Boud & Associates, 2010). Assessment should be challenging to students (Strydom, et al. 2012). Practices should include the use of rubrics, frameworks, benchmarking, institutional research, programme reviews and capstone modules to enhance quality (Plater, 2013). It is also important that assessments are reliable, valid, transparent, fair, practicable and realistic (Geyser, 2004a). Institutions and academics need to clarify what these terms mean for their particular contexts.

After the assessments have been set, administered and marked, academics need to give students feedback**.** Students are more likely to persist if they have been provided with frequent and early feedback (Tinto, 2003). This type of feedback should be appropriate, consistent, clear, and should contain sufficient details to be helpful to the student (Hoskins &

Newstead, 2009) and improve student learning (Boud & Associates, 2010). Boud and Associates (2010) further state that it is not sufficient to allocate marks when giving students feedback. There must be detailed information to help students understand how to do better next time as a feed forward process and to motivate students to learn more. Frequent feedback can promote student success in the classroom (Tinto, 2012), as compared to giving feedback only after the main assessment. Feedback may also avoid demotivation (Hoskins & Newstead, 2009). When academics give feedback, they should not tarnish the students. The words used by an academic when giving feedback should be carefully chosen. Academics should monitor the performance of students "all institutions need to have an effective and as far as possible standardized system for tracking and monitoring student performance" (Scott, et al. 2007, p. 67).

2.6.4 Supporting students (academic support)

Due to various plans to increase access to higher education institutions in South Africa, there has been a shift in student profile (Scott, et al. 2007), making it more important that students are supported. Success can be achieved if students are well supported from application stage to graduation and beyond. Institutions need to have wide support measures in order to ensure students' academic success (Akoojee & Nkomo, 2007) and retention. Student success and student retention can be linked to quality in teaching. Mcinnis (2000) highlights that despite professionalisation of student support services, many academics spend considerable time helping students with pastoral care. Practices related to student support should start at application stage (pre-enrolment) when students are still deciding on a course to study and need correct advice and guidance. Student support continues during enrolment, whereby those students who do not fully meet the entrance requirements could be enrolled in access programmes or be advised on alternatives. However, access programmes may have the unintended consequences of labelling and stigmatising students (Hlalele & Alexander, 2012). Students registered in these access programmes should not be made to feel inferior to other students in the institution. The access programmes should be only for supporting students to increase their chances of succeeding.

According to Zimitat (2006) each institution needs to have initiatives in place for addressing issues of first year engagement and retention. After being registered, post enrolment support

can aid students to adjust into the higher education environment (Crossman & Burdett, 2012). and could include the provision of student support initiatives especially during the first year of study (Harvey & Williams, 2010b), as this is where most challenges are normally encountered. When students are in first year, decisions to stay or leave are still unresolved (Tinto, 2003). The assistance could include academic and non-academic support once the student has registered to improve student retention and success. Practices could involve mentoring (Loots, 2008) and orientation. Mentoring includes identifying senior students to mentor new students, encouraging a close relationship between mentor and a mentee in order to deal with problems experienced by the mentee. Mentoring is a common practice in institutions and Steyn, et al. (2014) note that universities and departments have implemented programmes such as mentoring, special orientation sessions, additional study periods and bridging courses to assist students. Special orientation sessions could be discipline specific.

Students could also be supported academically during tutorials, whereby students work in groups, challenge one another and ask questions (Maharaj, 2012). However, it has been noted by Vazquez (2014, p. 117) that "there are a few studies examining the higher education tutorial system" calling for studies ascertaining the impact of tutorials on student success in different contexts. This is important because tutorials are one of the student support initiatives often introduced by institutions. However, some students have been reported to believe that tutorials are designed for weak students (Toni & Makura, 2015). This perception might affect student attendance at tutorials. Another practice is that there could also be supplemental instruction to help students succeed in a particular course (Tinto, 2008). Such instruction could take place in winter schools and residential education programmes (Loots, 2008). Close contact between students and teachers (Harvey & Williams, 2010b) is important post enrolment by means of ensuring that the university teachers are approachable and students feel free to ask them questions.

Students could also be assisted in the purchasing of textbooks. Steyn, et al. (2014, p. 6) notes that "to further extend support to students, universities may adopt policies that allow study materials to be purchased at reduced or wholesale prices". Another student support initiative could be ensuring that lecturers are proficient in counselling skills and study skills support (Harvey & Williams, 2010b) so that they can assist students in these areas. Lecturers are also under pressure to offer student pastoral care (Feigenbaum & Iqani, 2015).

This subsection on student support practices reveals that the literature refers to support in the pre-enrolment stage, the enrolment stage and post enrolment stage. The support provided to students should translate into success in the classroom (Tinto, 2012).

2.6.5 Selecting and enrolling students

It has been noted that the higher education system in South Africa is characterised by low participation and high attrition rates (Badsha & Cloete, 2011). Therefore, more attention needs to be paid to student recruitment, selection and enrolment practices to increase participation in the higher education sector and to enhance student success. Furthermore, student enrolment practices can affect quality in teaching. The manner in which students are recruited, selected and enrolled is linked to quality in teaching. This is because the type of students who are in university classrooms can have an effect on how teaching and learning takes place. Furthermore, according to Jones (2014), there is a link between dual enrolment and academic success especially in first year students who come to study in colleges. Dual enrolment is not yet popular in the South African context; dual enrolment is whereby high school students are given an opportunity to register for some courses at a post-secondary institution whilst they are still in high school. For example they can register for bridging courses, in order to assist them in the transition to university the following year (Jones, 2014).

Since dual enrolment is not a common practice in South Africa, at SAUT in particular, the fact remains that students come to higher education from different backgrounds (See Chapter One) with little knowledge about the higher education sector and about the different disciplines. Students in higher education institutions vary in terms of age, academic background and aspirations (Austin & Sorcinelli, 2013). Their different educational backgrounds (Steyn, et al. 2014) in the public and private school sectors are perceived to result in different levels of education. Mostly, students come under-prepared and with little knowledge about which career they would like to pursue. Despite these different backgrounds, different preparedness levels and little career guidance in South Africa, there is a national imperative to widen access to higher education (See Chapter Three). However, increasing access should be in line with success **(**Akoojee & Nkomo, 2007). Students enrolled in a higher education institution indicate access capacity of the country's higher education system (Idoniboye-Obu, 2015), with the greater the number of students entering

higher education indicating a higher education capacity. However, students' limited knowledge about the higher education sector, and about career choices coupled with a call to increase access do pose serious challenges to quality. Students end up registering for any available course, which can have an impact on quality. Hence academics should be aware that when they enroll students in line with the national imperative of increasing access, there must be various strategies in place to ensure that these students are supported to help them succeed. The various support strategies are discussed in section 2.6.4.

Different institutions have put in place strategies related to selecting and admitting students (Essack, Wedekind & Naidoo, 2012). In some institutions it is the responsibility of academics to recruit students. It has been noted that the practice of recruiting students, has not been fully explored in the literature (Pretlow III, 2014). According to Pretlow III (2014), practices related to recruiting students could include provision of information to students, interaction with students and providing students with opportunities to ask important questions for instance regarding the requirements of a course, before the student starts the application process. Some students require assistance with the application process as they sometimes do not understand the application form. With reference to selection practices, particular attention needs to be paid to the entrance requirements in place. For instance, some private institutions in Zimbabwe were admitting students with as low as two points which had an impact on quality (Garwe, 2012). In the South African context, the selection into higher education is based on the National Senior Certificate (NSC) results which is also known as Grade 12 results or matric results. These results are assumed to be reliable in determining the readiness of students for tertiary studies (Steyn, et al. 2014). However, there have been concerns that "the NSC results do not necessarily provide sufficient information about students' academic proficiencies" (Toni & Makura, 2015, p. 47). In some cases, students meet the entrance requirements but they struggle through their studies. Due to different schooling backgrounds as mentioned earlier, there are concerns regarding the reliability of the NSC results. There is an argument for lowering entrance requirements (Wadee & Cliff, 2016), in order to expand access to higher education.

Currently, practices related to selecting students are performed by academics especially in UoTs (see 4.5.8). These include academics accessing the Central Application Office (CAO) website, where academics pre-select students (Green, 2013) online based on their matric trial results or NSC results and on the information provided by students to the CAO at application

stage. Some programmes have additional criteria besides the NSC results (Wadee & Cliff, 2016) and have developed their own tests in order to select students for registration in their programmes. The additional criteria are selection tests or selection interviews before or after the manual scan of the statement of NSC results. An example of a selection test at national level is the National Benchmark Test (NBT). This test is used to assess the academic potential of students (Toni & Makura, 2015) in order to better understand first year students.

After undergoing the various selection processes, a student is then given a final firm offer (containing a registration date) or a final regret (Green, 2013). The enrollment process then follows which also involves academics. The enrollment process is finalised when the academic, after accepting the student, directs the student to the finance department, the administration department and protection services to complete the registration process. Therefore academics are the first step in the application, selection and enrolment process.

2.6.6 Developing professionally

Higher education institutions are characterised amongst other things by the academics who work in the institutions. Plater (2013) advocates that the reality of who comprise the academic workforce and their qualifications raises important questions about quality. Currently institutions are responsible for recruiting, appointing, inducting and retaining academics. Academics need to be intrinsically motivated as individuals to attend staff development programmes, to upgrade their qualifications and attain various skills related to their jobs as university teachers. Institutions need to have appropriate systems for the professional development of academics (Scott, et al. 2007) and for supporting academics. However the need for academics to be teachers and researchers usually conflicts with the time to attend staff development programmes (Leibowitz, et al. 2017). The institution's ability to attract and retain academic staff impacts on quality (Leibowitz, et al. 2017) yet institutions rely on the capabilities and the goodwill of its employees to provide quality (Harvey & Williams, 2010b; Ghonji, Khoshnodifar, Hosseini & Mazloumzadeh, 2015). Quality is directly proportional to the quality of teachers (Zaki &, Rashidi, 2013); hence teaching skills are crucial (Cardoso, Tavares & Sin, 2015). Teaching skills are expressed during lecture presentation and during group discussions (Goh, 1996) but as discussed in section 1.6, a formal qualification on university teaching before one becomes employed as a

university teacher is often not a requirement and the teaching skills are not necessarily developed. The debate is whether should there should be formal training required from academics in South African higher education institutions (Moodly & Drake, 2016). "Academics are required to learn on-the-job from day one, often without guidance, mentoring or support" (Leibowitz, et al. 2017, p. 30). In the case of professional programmes, the requirement is that those who teach in these programmes should be qualified professionals, but they usually have limited pedagogical training (Colleen, 1999; Wood & Maistry, 2014). According to Stander and Herman, (2017) academics in private higher education institutions in South Africa, are often industry specialists who lack sound pedagogical knowledge.

This is also the case in public higher education institutions where for instance academics are not taught how to use their voices during teaching as found in a study by Feigenbaum and Iqani (2015). Academics also need to have skills to handle large and more diverse classrooms as this is a growing challenge in higher education as discussed in Chapter One**.** It is important to have teachers with teacher training (Kettunen, 2008) in higher education as this would ensure that the practices they implement are pedagogically sound. Academics also need to keep abreast of new technological developments and interact with industry (Goh, 1996), particularly in a UoT context where qualifications are to be linked to industry.

However, academics should be competent to teach in English and other languages as requested by the institution. English is the commonly used language of instruction because it is associated with economic benefits (van Laren & Goba, 2013). In the South African context, another language of instruction used in some institutions is Afrikaans, because of the history of these institutions and the type of students they were created for. However Mgqwashu (2011) argues that African languages such as isiZulu and Sotho should also be used as languages of instruction because these are first languages to many students. African languages could also be developed as languages of instruction since the number of African students who come to higher education has grown rapidly. In the near future, academics will need to be competent to teach in more than one language, because most students in higher education in South Africa are English second language speakers and have an African language as their first language. This is contrary to Phillips and Pugh's (2010, p. 138) opinion that "students from countries such as America, Australia, Canada and South Africa are English first language speakers". This is not the case, and the South African government

is advocating the use of African languages as languages of instruction in order to cater for the needs of black students (Steyn, et al. 2014), many of whom struggle with the languages used in higher education. An alternative could be to acknowledge multilingualism in the classroom and have small group discussions proceeding in languages other than the language of instruction (van Rensburg & Lamberti, 2004). The issue of the language used during teaching, should be handled in such a way that no language is treated as inferior or superior to another. At the same time the language of instruction used should not limit the students' understanding of concepts and should not limit their future growth.

Staff working in universities and colleges need to be developed academically in various areas so that they do not compromise quality. Despite the link between staff development initiatives and quality argued above, some believe that staff development is more about developing an appropriate caring and encouraging environment than it is about providing training (Harvey & Williams, 2010b). According to Tinto (2012), universities and colleges are aware of the lack of teaching skills and have for many years invested in staff development programs. These programmes include formal programmes provided by academic developers in the institution (Leibowitz, et al. 2017). Staff development programmes are deliberate plans by management to improve the quality of staffing (Ocham & Okoth, 2015; Austin and Sorcinelli, 2013) since there is a relationship between the availability of adequate teaching staff and quality. Academics need to be knowledgeable about subject content in order to remain current (Makunye & Pelser, 2012) and relevant but they also need to be supported in research related to teaching and learning and be encouraged to participate in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. Chitanand (2015) asserts that comprehensive professional development programs can help ensure student success, as staff become well equipped to perform their duties. Therefore there is a link between staff support, development and student success.

Staff development practices can be divided into two groups. There are practices that are the responsibility of the institution, whereby the institution puts in place initiatives to develop academics. Then there are practices implemented by academics in order to develop themselves. Practices related to the institution refer to how the institution ensures that there is adequate and available staff, how it takes care of the well-being of academics, what initiatives are in place to support and develop academics, how academics are promoted in an institution and whether the institution recognises teaching skills over qualifications, research and

industry experience when appointing new teaching staff. Institutional practices include putting in place institution-wide frameworks, instruments to evaluate quality in teaching, encouraging teamwork amongst academics as well as having platforms encouraging staff to share their practices.

On the part of the institution, conditions of employment impact on quality in teaching (Garwe 2012). Furthermore, if there is a shortage of teaching staff, quality is compromised (Garwe, 2012). When staff are supported and developed by the institution, the quality of the materials is expected to improve (Huizinga, Handelzalts, Nieveen & Voogt, 2014). Furthermore, professional lives of academics also improve through being promoted within the institution. The main reward of an academic is promotion (Council on Higher Education, 2015), as it brings improvement in one's professional and personal life. However, Selesho (2014) notes that many academics are not satisfied with promotion prospects within the institution since institutions appear to favor research over teaching when assessing applications for promotion. This is the case at SAUT as more points are allocated for research than for teaching (See Chapter Four). Wahlen (2002) argues that institutions need to recognise the importance of teaching skills rather than recognising qualifications only when appointing academics (Wahlen, 2002) or attempt to strike a balance between the two. The employment of academics should also be in line with his or her expertise (Nabaho, et al. 2016), matching them with modules taught.

Institutions should ensure that they retain academics, by putting retention strategies into place and encouraging retention practices from various managers within the institution. If academics are retained in the institution, the institution can focus more on quality. Hence, institutions need to have plans in place to ensure that academics are prevented from walking out of the institution and they know what academics expect from the institution and vice versa (Selesho, 2014). Although staff retention is critical in ensuring quality, academics should be cautious of overstaying in an institution as this could have negative effects (Too, Chepchieng & Ochola, 2015) such as resistance to change.

Practices related to academics' development of themselves include upgrading qualifications, obtaining various skills in teamwork, using technology, collaboration, interaction with industry and ensuring a moral mentality. When academics upgrade qualifications this is considered a quality practice. In South Africa, it has been noted that the factor that

determines quality in higher education is qualifications of staff (NDP, 2011). With well qualified academics, the institution can ensure quality and sustainability (Too, et al. 2015). With more academics that are highly qualified with PhDs there are greater opportunities for imparting quality (Garwe, 2012) to students. Garwe (2012), further states that in Zimbabwe, the minimum qualification to become a lecturer is a Master's degree in public and private institutions. In the South African context, the minimum requirement to teach in a University of Technology has recently been changed from Masters into a PhD with publications. However, this requirement brings certain challenges for example, when someone engages in PhD studies, their teamwork skills drop as compared to before they embarked on a PhD (Manathunga, Pitt & Critchley, 2009). Academics have to work on their team work skills after graduating with a PhD. If this is not addressed, it can negatively impact on how academics work. In a South African study, Pithouse-Morgan, Naicker, Masinga, Pillay and Hlao, (2016) found that many participants had concerns about the national and institutional imperatives to obtain PhDs in as short a time as possible. This pressure is perceived to be lead to serious stress levels as academics are also expected to select and enroll students, design currica, teach, set and mark assessments, supervise post graduate students and produce research publications. Institutions need to concentrate on the well-being of academics (Harvey & Williams, 2010b). Furthermore, there are issues of unwelcoming gendered and racial environments especially for black women wanting to enroll for doctoral studies (Loots, Ts'ephe & Walker, 2016). These pressures and challenges in obtaining PhDs can influence the rate at which academics upgrade their qualifications.

Other practices related to staff developing themselves include staff attending conferences, workshops and courses (Deni, et al. 2014), which are conferences related to curriculum issues, teaching as well as assessment in higher education.

Academics need to obtain skills in teamwork and collaboration as noted by Austin and Sorcinelli (2013) and staff engagement is encouraged such as communities of practice and building teams and collegial experiences (French, et al. 2014). Staff need to have a moral mentality as described by Zou, et al. (2012) as appropriate values, engagement and responsibilities. This moral mentality can assist in guiding the practices of academics. Collegiality is another quality practice, as noted by Blanco-Ramirez & Berger (2014), collegiality involving working relations amongst academics as well as the interaction amongst staff. However, Blanco-Ramirez and Berger (2014) further note that collegiality has

been de-emphasised in the higher education sector, because of the increased in emphasis on accountability.

The literature further highlights the practice of academics to continuously reflect on their teaching and to identify areas needing improvement. Mentz and Mentz (2006. p. 107) note that "educators should be self-reflective, self-critical and continuously analyse their academic activities in order to identify areas for improvement and development".

Narismulu and Dhunpath (2011) maintain that reflective practice in teaching and learning is a key element in the transformation of practices. It involves university teachers assessing their own practices. Reflection means looking back at something and thinking about what happened and why it happened (Killen, 2010, p. 109). Reflection involves examining the assumptions of everyday practice and requires academics to be self-aware (Lebowitz, et al. 2017) and to keep in mind the type of students (Toni & Makura, 2015). When reflecting, it is best to use a theory that helps teachers reflect on what they are doing (Biggs, 2012). According to Biggs, (2012) the theory involves looking at the present and thinking of means of improvement in future. Reflective practice involves collecting evidence and using it in order to establish a course of action (Ashcroft & Foreman-Peck, 1995). Reflection is aimed at coming up with strategies to improve teaching and learning processes (Toni & Makura, 2015). "Through reflection, one can be able to improve one's behavior in practice" (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2010. p. 530). This is when academics concentrate on the 'self' and on their practices as compared to focusing on students and on the institution. No matter how well you teach there is always room for improvement (Killen, 2010). Irrespective of the qualifications, title and the number of years an academic has taught in higher education, there is always room for reflection for improving practice. Figure 1 represents the cyclic relationship between practice and reflection.

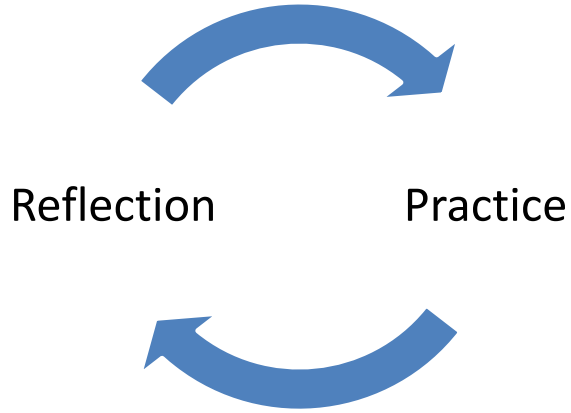

Figure 1: Cyclic relation between practice and reflection (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2010).

2.6.7 Student evaluation of teaching

As stated in the previous section, reflection is key to developing practices. Just as academics need to ask themselves important questions regarding what happened and why something happened, so too should students be asked by academics to reflect on their own experiences of teaching and learning (Toni & Makura, 2015). Students' opinions are important as they are direct participants in the higher education system (Puška, et al. 2016). Henard and Roseveare (2012) assert that it is important for institutions to develop instruments for gathering student feedback. Student involvement in the quality system includes student surveys, course committees and graduating student surveys (EI-Maghraby, 2011). One of the means of obtaining feedback from students is using student evaluations. As stated by Moraru (2012), quality management in higher education teaching is mostly excavated using student feedback. This involves students evaluating teachers by means of questionnaires (Nabaho, et al. 2016). The information is used for judgement purposes and for informing decisions on promotion and developmental purposes (Ashcroft & Foreman-Peck, 1995).

Student evaluations have proven to be an efficient means of obtaining feedback in the USA, UK and in many parts of the world (Hammonds, Mariano, Ammons & Chambers, 2017). Academics need to understand that these evaluations assist them in improving their performance and subsequently in improving quality (Mentz & Mentz, 2006; Hammonds, et al. 2017).

Students feel confident to complete evaluation forms. Brockx, Van Roy and Mortelmans (2012, p, 1132) note that "students seem to take their tasks as a commentator seriously" and they feel competent to evaluate quality (Pavlina, et al. 2011). Henard and Roseveare, (2012) and Scott, et al (2007) highlight the importance of institutions putting in place institution-wide frameworks for enhancing the quality in teaching. Institutions should develop reliable instruments for gathering and using student feedback and encourage staff to engage in various platforms to share best practices. However, simply collecting information from students is a fruitless exercise if that information cannot be used to improve teaching and learning. Student evaluations can be useful if lecturers actually use the results and make changes to their courses (Hammonds, et al. 2017).

Feedback collected using student evaluations is to be acted upon. To this effect, French, et al. (2014) note that "merely collecting data is not enough an authentic quality assurance process should allow academics time and space to reflect on the data they collect to improve curricula, assessment and programme design" (p. 26).

The use of student evaluation questionnaires to evaluate teaching is not without problems (Boughey, 2004). Although student evaluations have been recognised as measures of quality in teaching, it has been noted that student evaluations have low response rates (Harvey & Williams, 2010b; Hammonds, et al. 2017), possible because students do not see the value of completing the evaluations. One of the factors that discourage students from completing the form is that administrators do not take their feedback seriously (Nabaho, et al. 2016). Another problem regarding student evaluations is that these questionnaires have serious limitations which include students not giving input on teaching and often leaving the comments section unanswered **(**Vazquez, 2014). Questionnaires have also been criticised for focusing more on the teacher and less on the student and restricting students' feedback by means of structured questions (Zerihun, Beishuizen & van Os 2011). Student evaluations have also been criticised for being retrospective and for being able to identify problems but never to generate solutions (Feigenbaum & Iqani, 2015) on their own. It is then up to that academic to generate solutions. Another challenge related to student evaluations noted by Douglas and Douglas (2006) is that academics have little faith in student evaluation questionnaires and lack trust in the information they yield. Thus student evaluation questionnaires also do little for academics' future teaching performance (Deni et al. 2014). Student evaluations have also been viewed as being for accountability rather than for improvement purposes (Blackmore, 2009). It has also

been noted that student evaluations are usually administered at the end of the course and thus the feedback obtained cannot be used to improve the learning experience for that particular cohort of students (Narasimhan, 2001). One needs to strike a balance between quantitative and qualitative measures to measure the impact of teaching rather than only the outcomes (Essack, et al. 2012).

Student evaluations require procedures for dealing with feedback obtained. Examples could be providing pedagogic support to academics who have received negative results in student evaluations (Cardoso, et al. 2015). This is so that academics can deal with all kinds of feedback and develop in the areas identified by students. Additionally, students should be given feedback regarding how their evaluations will be used (Nabaho, et al. 2016). This will assist in encouraging students to complete evaluations.

The literature reveals that employer and graduate surveys can also be used to obtain feedback from different higher education stakeholders. Employer surveys are important in understanding what employers expect the students. Graduate surveys on the other hand are important in establishing the employment experiences of students after graduation (Manathunga, et al. 2009) as well as experiences of graduates regarding the institution. This type of information can assist in improving quality in teaching with particular reference to meeting the needs of the students and the employers. Feedback from students can also be obtained from discussions around teaching and learning between student representatives and heads of department (Nabaho, et al. 2016). Staff-student liaison committees at departmental and programme levels is another way of enhancing and managing quality (McKimm, 2009).

There are also informal means of obtaining feedback from students besides using student evaluation and surveys. These include things such as suggestions during class time, discussions after class and focus group discussions (Zerihun, et al. 2011).

2.6.8 Conducting peer evaluations

Peer evaluation practices refer to those practices implemented by internal and external peers towards assuring and enhancing quality. In the literature, practices related to this category mainly include moderating of student assessments, peer review of teaching as well as external examining. Bloxham, Hughes and Adie (2015) also note that one approach to quality

assurance for most higher education institutions is moderation of assessments, to check the quality of the assessment prior to assessments being written and to check the quality of the marking after the assessment has been marked. Moderation can be both internal and external. Internal moderation refers to moderation conducted within the institution whereby peers monitor one another's practices (Murdoch & Grobbelaar, 2004) and offer recommendations for practice. External moderation involves someone from outside the institution at undergraduate and postgraduate level. Moderation of assessments also includes evaluation of examinations. In a study conducted by Sandmaung and Khang (2013), it was found that evaluation of examinations is consistently an important expectation of all higher education stakeholders and involves academics participating in processes like examination audits.

In addition to the practice of moderating assessments, peer review of teaching is also noted in the literature. This refers to peers being physically present in the classrooms to evaluate the teaching skills and strategies of an academic during a lecture. It also involves a panel commenting on the practices employed by lecturers in their classrooms, as well as careful examination of materials and course design (Reitsma & van Hamburg, 2013). This is a way of obtaining constructive feedback from peers in terms of teaching skills and strategies. Peer evaluation of teaching can enhance quality (Reitsma & van Hamburg, 2013) and may be more useful than student evaluation of teaching (Hammonds, et al. 2017). However, peer review of teaching may be considered an imposition in academics' classrooms (Harvey & Williams, 2010b). Consideration should be given to who is evaluating an academic as well as the relationship between the evaluator and the person being evaluated since the relationship could influence the evaluation process. On the other hand, this process could be welcomed by the academic being evaluated for its developmental purposes. Therefore, peer reviewers need to be careful not to avoid appearing to suffocate the academic being reviewed but rather attempt to provide constructive feedback to improve his/her practice. Furthermore, reviewers need to be careful not to 'buy' friendship using the peer evaluation tools and avoid giving honest evaluations. In some cases, peer evaluation of teaching could be done using a video clip and the peer review can take place electronically. In addition to moderating assessments and peer review of teaching, there are also peer initiatives where academics can attend each other's classes and form a council for continuous improvement of teaching (Cardoso, et al. 2015).

External examining is another peer evaluation practice noted in the literature. External examining is expected in the case of masters and doctoral studies (Ntshoe, et al. 2010) more than at undergraduate level. This is whereby Masters and Doctoral dissertations are examined outside the institution, within a particular country and outside of that country. External examiners must be senior academic members (Kadhila, 2012). However, there are quality concerns in external examining as external examiners may pass students on the understanding that their students will also be passed by colleagues when they later serve as external examiners (Ntshoe, et al. 2010). This possible openness to manipulation creates a concern regarding external examining as one of the peer evaluation practices used to assure and enhance quality. Institutions therefore need to safeguard processes of appointing examiners.

2.6.9 Reviews, evaluations and annual quality monitoring

Institutions need to continuously monitor and improve their programmes (Kadhila, 2012), by putting programme reviews and evaluations in place. Review processes are regarded as the framework for quality improvement (Colleen, 1999) with institutions claiming that they can control quality through internal processes for hiring, promotion and administrative review procedures (Plater, 2013). Indeed, an institution can review itself or some of its own programmes (Skolnik, 2010) and most institutions have set up structures for programme reviews (Lomas, 2007; McKenna, 2014). Although these structures are set up by managers and quality practitioners, academics are expected to prepare and participate in different forms of reviews and evaluations. Internal programme reviews and evaluations are conducted when an institution quality assures its own programmes. This involves the Quality Unit in an institution reviewing and academics participating during this process.

Programme evaluations vary (Loots, 2008) and the purposes of programme evaluations differ (Venter & Bezuidenhout, 2008), since each review is designed to achieve different objectives. Sometimes, programme reviews and evaluations are conducted for improvement purposes and this includes asking what worked, how it worked and why (Blackmore, 2009) thereby improving quality in teaching. In other cases, a basis for programme evaluations is to enhance accountability of programme providers (Green, 2013). Both of these are required. However, Blackmore (2009) cautions that evaluations conducted for accountability purposes focus on “tracking the paper trails” (p. 861), while it is more important that evaluations are

conducted with a purpose of improving practices. It has also been noted that evaluations can have hidden agendas (Green, 2013), known only by those conducting the evaluations but the outcomes of the reviews should be to identify strengths and weaknesses and to demonstrate improvement (Colleen, 1999).

With particular reference to the relationship between academics and reviews and evaluations, a study in a South African context has noted that programme reviews present administrative demands on academics (Selesho, 2014). It has also been found that quality assurance measures are regarded as burdensome by lecturers (Cheng, 2011). Institutions need to implement reviews and evaluations which have the potential to improve quality in teaching.

There is also the process of Annual Quality Monitoring (AQM) identified by Martens and Prosser (1998). In the 1990s, quality assurance of teaching transformed from being by means of a feedback questionnaire to students, to ongoing monitoring which was then institutionalised for accountability purposes. This means that both the programme reviews and the annual quality monitoring processes are put in place for accountability processes. Academics need to use these processes to improve their practices.

Having discussed the quality practices stated in the literature, the discussion now moves into what has been noted as factors that can affect quality in teaching.

2.7 Factors that can affect quality in teaching

Academics do not work in isolation. They work within particular environments, structures and cultures. Their practices could be enabled or constrained by various factors that have the potential to affect quality in teaching. The literature suggests a number of factors that can affect quality in teaching. Understanding these factors as documented in the literature is worthwhile in order to later ascertain what academics who participated in this study reported as enhancers and impediments to quality in teaching in their particular contexts. This section addresses the factors that can affect quality in teaching, as documented in the literature. Henard and Roseveare (2012, p. 8) name the following factors:

- *The broadening scope of education and greater diversity of student profiles*
- *Increased pressures of global competition and economic efficiency*

- *The changes in technology which can quickly make programme content obsolete*
- *The internationalisation of higher education*

Factors that can have an effect on quality in teaching include external factors and factors related to the institution, the students, the lecturers, and support staff. In the following paragraphs I provide examples of each of these broad categories of factors.

With regards to external factors, as discussed earlier, the government has put pressure on higher education institutions to increase access and this has an impact on quality. The first obstacle identified by Henard and Roseveare (2012) which affects quality in teaching is the broadening scope of education, which results in large classes and growing diversity of student profiles. The broadening scope and massification were identified in section 1.2 as some of the challenges facing the higher education sector. Studies have shown that quality in teaching can be affected by growing numbers because the challenge to academics of dealing with many students, some often being at a distance (as discussed under 1.2). Massification has resulted in diverse and underprepared students as discussed in section 2.6.5.

Another external factor is the involvement of professional bodies in higher education (as discussed under section 2.3). Ballim, et al. (2014) note that academics teach to the external assessments designed by professional bodies.

The national government and institutions can set 'acceptable' pass rates as noted by Lim (2009). This is when pass rates are linked to accessing government funding, therefore institutions put pressure on academics to have 'acceptable' pass rates in order for the institution to receive funding. Having 'acceptable' pass rates in the institution, could lead to academics setting easier assignments and examinations and becoming more lenient when marking in order to meet this 'acceptable' pass rate expectation.

Other factors that can affect quality in teaching, which can be both external and internal to the institution, could be the organisational background, context, values and existing structures (Ehlers, 2009). In the case of higher education, background might refer to how the institution was formed, which can determine how it is operated, the practices in the institution and the facilities available in the institution. Similar to the background of the institution, the contextual factors can affect quality in teaching such as where the institution is based as well

as the values upheld in the institution. Mårtensoon, et al. (2014) is of the view that there has to be some degree of alignment between different organisational units in the institution However existing organisational structures usually get in the way (Saunders, 2012). Scott, (2013) cautions that it is a myth that restructuring will automatically improve quality. There should be a balance between restructuring and evaluating the effectiveness of that restructuring in improving quality.

Other factors that can influence quality in teaching as identified by Castle, (2013) are that institutions face escalating corporatisation and managerialism which both can affect quality in teaching as institutions are now being run like businesses. Managerialism can impact negatively on quality in teaching because the managerial paradigm and the professional paradigm are in conflict (Randle & Brady, 1997). Managerialism is the tendency to view evaluation from the perspective of the manager (Skolnik, 2010). Lecturers as professionals have different priorities from to institutional managers. Managerialism is already evident in the South African higher education context, with the sector operating in the context of corporate managerialist reforms (Pithouse-Morgan, et al. 2016). The managerialism orientation tends to disempower other stakeholders (Skolnik, 2010).

Other factors that can affect quality in teaching include staff development initiatives available in an institution as academics require time to go and attend such initiatives. This could mean time away from their classes if these staff development initiatives are not linked to what the academic does in the classroom. On the other hand, if academics are allocated time to attend these staff development initiatives, that attendance can yield positive results. The functioning of support departments within the institution can also contribute to enhancing or impeding quality in teaching. For example, the Human Resources Department within the institution could sometimes delay the appointment of academics (Masehela, 2015), leaving students without a lecturer in class or causing another academic to cover for the lecturer still to be appointed. Having more part-time than full-time staff is another factor that can have implications for quality (Sander & Herman, 2017).

Teaching can be supported by providing suitable teaching facilities and equipment (Cardoso, et al. 2016). It has been found by Mcinnis (2000) that the lack of up-to-date teaching equipment and technology was considered to be a hindrance to teaching. The infrastructure,

facilities and finances in an institution are important for quality (Garwe, 2012). If the infrastructure in the institution is not well maintained and developed or there are insufficient resources this can have negative effect on quality in teaching. The changes in technology can affect teaching (Henard & Roseveare, 2012), but in some cases "improvement in resources does not necessarily translate to improvement in teaching" (Ntshoe et al. 2010, p. 129). Therefore, institutions need to strive for a balance between improving teaching facilities and improving other areas within the institution. For example, the focus on facilities has become less relevant in the USA context (Ewell, 2010).

Another factor that can impact on quality in teaching is academics' working conditions (Senthilkumar & Arulraj, 2011). Institutions need to pay attention to working conditions such as working hours and workload allocation. In contrast to the notion that universities are ivory towers where small numbers of the self-governing elite dwell (Kettis, et al. 2013), academics are being overburdened by multiple demands and increasing workloads. These workloads are a result of large student numbers (Materu & Righetti, 2010), as discussed earlier in this section, administrative duties, supervision duties and the pressure of generating research outputs (Feigenbaum & Iqani, 2015). Academics have to deal with an increasingly complex and demanding work environment (Melin, et al. 2014). The environment puts pressure on them leading to the belief that they are never good enough and resulting in high stress levels and decreasing job satisfaction. These roles and demands on academics could also reduce the time they dedicate to teaching thus having a negative impact on quality in teaching. These demands on academics could also have an impact on the well-being of academics physically and emotionally, more particularly when academics are given high teaching workloads and teaching takes a great deal of time (Pithoutse-Morgan, et al. 2016).

Other factors that can affect quality in teaching concerning academics include passivity, lack of interest, communication gaps, heavy working schedules, organisational structures as well as over-valuing research (Cardoso, et al. 2016). Moraru (2012, p. 75) argues that "the research criterion is the one that prevails and affects the quality of teaching duties" especially if the link between research and teaching quality is not emphasised. This over-valuing of research results from the pressure on higher education institutions to build world class research-intensive institutions and to attract funding (see Chapter One). This reveals how global competition and economic benefits (Henard & Roseveare, 2012) are associated with research.

It has been noted that some institutions experience poor lecturing and lecturer absenteeism (Council on Higher Education, 2011), which affects quality in teaching and can have negative consequences on student success. Poor lecturing and lecturer absenteeism could be associated with the qualities of the lecturer as an individual, his or her personality, teaching philosophy, motivation, attitude, job satisfaction, other commitments outside the institution and knowledge about teaching in higher education. Motivation can either be intrinsic or extrinsic (Tohidi & Jabbari, 2012). If motivation is lacking, it could affect quality in teaching negatively. Lecturer motivation as well as competence can affect quality (Suarman & Yasin, 2013). If university teachers are motivated and committed to their tasks, students are more likely to have good education (Haseena & Mohammed, 2015). Negative attitudes towards students and towards teaching, could also affect quality in teaching. A positive attitude of the lecturer towards teaching can translate into enthusiasm and care for students (Goh, 1996). Additionally, if lecturers do not understand the students, such as their backgrounds and the problems they face or they lack empathy towards students, they could adopt 'inhumane' higher education practices (Toni & Makura, 2015) which can affect quality in teaching and affect student success negatively. Furthermore the personal qualities and the characteristics of an academic can affect quality in teaching. Table 2 displays characteristics of a good university teacher as reported by students and university teachers in a study conducted by Zerihun, et al. (2011). These characteristics can have an effect on quality.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD UNIVERSITY TEACHER AS STATED BY STUDENTS	**CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD UNIVERSITY TEACHER AS STATED BY UNIVERSITY TEACHERS**
Punctuality	Punctuality
Knowledgeable	Knowledgeable
Well organised	Organised
Good communicator	Clear presentation skills
Provide feedback	Provide feedback
Self confidence	
Sociable and friendly	Considering student's comments
Provide adequate course material	
	Assess continuously

Table 2: Characteristics of a good academic (adapted from Zerihun et al., 2011)

Sikhwari, et al. (2015) referred to lecturer attributes as important in teaching and learning and affecting students' academic performance. The personal attributes of the teacher are critical to quality (Goh, 1996). Another impediment to teaching could be teachers who believe that

they deserve better students. Biggs (2010) refers to these types of teachers as ‘‘*toxic teachers*” since they focus on the negatives and pay no or little attention to the positive aspects related to students.

Another factor that can affect quality in teaching is that of external examiners (Biggs, 2001). Biggs (2001) states that although external examiners are important, innovative assessment practices can sometimes be discouraged through the process of external examining, as some examiners may discourage creativity.

Other factors that can affect quality in teaching can be the students themselves: the poor selection of courses by students as well as the motivation levels of students. This is caused by students not having career guidance at an early stage (see section 2.6.5) which could result in their lack of motivation and in less effort being made thereby affecting teaching. If students are not genuinely interested in studying a particular course, they can have a negative attitude towards the course, hindering to quality in teaching. For example if students are merely studying a course as a backup plan to their originally intended course or for the sake of pleasing their parents, the students may lack commitment (Toni & Makura, 2015) resulting in a negative effect on quality.

Student’s different learning approaches could be another factor affecting quality. Students who adopt a surface learning approach can inhibit quality in teaching as compared to students who adopt a deep learning approach which is more likely to stimulate a variety of teaching methods (Biggs, 2012). This is because students, who adopt a deep approach to learning, are more likely to be engaged and be active participants in the learning process, than those who employ a surface approach to learning.

In terms of student evaluations, Biggs (2001) identified student feedback questionnaires as quality impeders in teaching as they have a tendency to discourage innovation as the emphasis is put on the teacher’s organisation skills. Also the feedback received from these questionnaires varies depending on the student’s own conceptions of teaching hence questionnaires cannot be used to evaluate innovative or student-centred teaching (Zerihun, et al. 2011). The emphasis is put on the teacher. Student feedback questionnaires can impede quality in teaching because academics themselves can influence how students respond to these questionnaires by giving generous marks just before the administration of the survey

(Lim, 2009). Therefore, these questionnaires are susceptible to manipulation by either students or staff (Anderson, 2006).

Thus, it can be noted that there are external and internal factors that can have an effect on quality in teaching and that these are not mutually exclusive.

Having now introduced some of the literature on the origins of quality, stakeholders involved in issues of quality in higher education, concepts related to quality and quality practices in teaching, I now move on to discussing a theoretical perspective that highlights relations between institutions and their environment.

2.8 Neo-institutional theory

Neo-institutional theory is a middle range theory (Woldegiorgis, 2013) concerned with how institutions relate to external pressures from different stakeholders. Institutions are driven to incorporate procedures and practices (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). The theory posits that the environment steers the institution in a particular direction and subsequently impacts on the behavior (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983) of the policy actors. Neo-institutional theory has its roots in the 1970s introducing isomorphism and de-coupling as core concepts.

Isomorphism

In their seminal paper, Meyer and Rowan (1977) introduce the concept of isomorphism. Isomorphism in sociology is a drive and it is a process towards homogeneity (sameness). Hence isomorphic pressures produce homogeneity (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Isomorphism is about what drives institutions to adopt certain policies and practices and it's the relation to the external environment. Meyer and Rowan (1977) explain that isomorphism promotes the survival and success of organisations. It is about applying an external criterion of worth in order to become isomorphic with external environments and to gain resources needed to survive. Conformity to the external criteria is enforced through inspection and evaluation process which are ceremonialised. In this way output quality is continually monitored (Meyer & Rowan, 1977, p. 357). Organisations thus incorporate elements which are

legitimated externally because of dependence on the external environment and to increase their legitimacy. Furthermore, organisations can align themselves to the external environment in order to reduce turbulence and to maintain stability.

In the 1980s isomorphism was revisited by DiMaggio and Powell (1983) and they extended the concept to include three isomorphism pressures:

Coercive isomorphism results from formal and informal pressures imposed on institutions by organisations on which they depend. Coercive isomorphic pressures could be regulations and pressure by the government forcing institutions to comply with published policies and legislation. It could stem from political/legal influence and also from cultural and social pressures (Acer & Güçlü, 2017). Institutions comply by engaging in various rituals and ceremonies in order to protect themselves. If they do not comply they are faced with a penalty which in higher education could be withdrawal of accreditation. The funding process is also related to coercive isomorphism (Papadimitriou & Westerheijden, 2011) in the case of state-funded institutions. Institutions which succeed in becoming isomorphic with the external environment gain legitimacy and resources (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). Hence dependency increases in coercive isomorphism (Acer & Güçlü, 2017).

Mimetic isomorphism is a pressure resulting from uncertainty. It is from a powerful pressure that encourages imitation and modelling (Acer & Güçlü, 2017). Institutions can model themselves upon similar institutions which they perceive to be more legitimate or successful, copying the publicly known best practices from other organisations or university units (Papadimitriou & Westerheijden, 2011).

Normative isomorphism is a pressure arising because of professionalisation. Members of a particular profession can define conditions and methods. It involves actors (Geda, 2014). Normative isomorphism can depend on formal education of members, norms of the profession as well as on professional networks. The profession has norms, standards and networks guiding and monitoring the profession. Normative isomorphism further includes the involvement of alumni, trade associations, professional associations and personnel who have received formal training in the management of universities (Papadimitriou & Westerheijden, 2011).

De-coupling

Another concept proposed by Meyer and Rowan (1977) was that of de-coupling whereby there are structures put in place to maintain the *assumption* that people are acting in good faith. De-coupling is a reaction to isomorphic pressures. Meyer and Rowan (1977) explain the neo-institutional concept of de-coupling as developing a symbolic response to the external environment and ceremonially adopting policies, practices and structures which appear to be legitimate. However the structures and sub-units become de-coupled from each other. There are rituals of confidence in place and there is avoidance of effective evaluation. The rituals are adopted for external legitimacy only.

Motivation for using neo-institutional theory

Neo-institutional theory has become one of the dominant approaches for explaining how institutions adapt to pressures (Papadimitriou & Westerheijden, 2011) particularly to pressures related to enhancing and ensuring quality. However it has been noted that most research by neo-institutional scholars adopts outward-looking perspective (Yang & Zheng, 2011) with outsiders studying various institutions. This study promotes the inward looking perspective of neo-institutional theory into the quality practices of academics in order to ascertain the harmonies (and disconnections) from the perspective of the insider. This takes into consideration that isomorphism has the ability to influence the adoption of quality (Nabaho, et al. 2016).

Neo-institutional theory has been used to study what drives quality in higher education institutions in Greece (Papadimitriou, 2010; Papadimitriou & Westerheijden, 2011), in Hong Kong (Jarvis, 2014), in Ethiopia (Geda, 2014) and in Uganda (Nabaho et al. 2016). However the theory has been criticised as weak in analysing organisational change (Papadimitriou & Westerheijden, 2011) and in ascertaining the consequences of de-coupling (Yang & Zheng, 2011). Irrespective of these drawbacks, the theory is relevant to provide a deeper understanding of quality practices in teaching together with what informs practices.

2.9 Conclusion

Chapter Two has demonstrated that the origins of the concept of quality can be traced to the business sector from where it flowed into the higher education sector. The various challenges discussed in Chapter One have resulted in internal and external stakeholders being associated with quality in higher education. Different internal and external stakeholders concerned with quality in higher education were discussed in this chapter, together with how they influence quality in teaching and learning.

The chapter proceeded to differentiate between quality assurance and quality enhancement which are two common terms in higher education. Quality assurance is retrospective while quality enhancement looks ahead. Explanations were also provided on the five conceptions of quality as exceptional, quality as perfection, quality as fitness for purpose, quality as value for money and quality as transformation. These five conceptions will serve later as a second analytical framework to understand how academics conceptualise quality.

The chapter moved into reviewing quality practices in teaching as documented in the literature. The literature suggests that practices include teaching students, designing the programme, assessing students, supporting students, selecting and enrolling students, developing professionally, conducting student evaluations and participating in reviews, evaluations and annual quality monitoring. With reference to teaching students, quality practices include using varied and suitable teaching strategies, acquiring deep understanding of the subjects, organising content, delivery lectures, using examples during teaching, relating the content to real life examples, promoting interaction and communication amongst students and using modern technology, case studies and group work. Programme design practices include constantly renewing and reviewing the curricular, planning the programme, integrating other disciplines when planning the programme, ensuring coherence of the programme, ensuring the programme equips students with appropriate skills, knowledge, values and attributes, asking students to solve problems, ensuring the programme is interesting, interacting closely with employers, responding to the needs of the global and local community and to the needs of students, matching curriculum with what other universities are offering, compiling study guides, detailing regulations for selecting

textbooks.

The literature review reveals that assessment should be part of programme design, involving students in assessments, ensuring assessments are challenging, using rubrics, frameworks, benchmarking and institutional research, ensuring assessment modes are valid, reliable, transparent, fair, practicable and realistic and providing students with feedback after assessments. Feedback should aim to motivate students rather than discourage them. Academics should monitor student performance. Student support practices include providing wide support measures, enrolling students in access programmes, providing support to first year students in particular, providing mentoring and tutorials, providing supplementary instruction such as winter schools, being approachable to students, assisting students in the purchasing of textbooks, becoming proficient in counselling skills and study skills and offering pastoral care to students. The literature further reveals that quality practices include student selection and recruitment practices. These include providing students with information, interacting with students, providing students opportunity to ask questions, accessing the Central Application Office website to pre-select students, selecting students manually, developing selection tests and enrolling students.

Professional development practices include developing competency in teaching, in English or any other language of instruction in the institution, participating in professional development programmes in the institution, participating in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, working in teams, demonstrating collegiality, upgrading qualifications, obtaining various skills in using technology, keeping up to date with technological developments, attending conferences, workshops and courses related to curriculum, teaching and assessment, and reflecting on teaching. The literature further reveals that practices related to student evaluations include obtaining feedback from students using questionnaires, allocating time and space to reflect on the data obtained from questionnaires, using the results obtained to make changes to courses, administering employer surveys and graduate surveys and obtaining informal feedback. Conducting peer evaluations include academics monitoring each other's teaching and assessment practices, participating in examination audits and forming a council for continuous improvement of teaching and external examining. The last category of the practices includes participating in reviews, evaluations and annual quality monitoring.

Internal and external factors that can affect quality in teaching were also provided. The chapter ends with an explanation of neo-institutional theory as a theoretical framework later adopted in this study to understand the findings at a deeper level.

Although Chapter Two has reviewed the literature, there is still a need for an in depth discussion regarding how the national (Chapter Three) and institutional (Chapter Four). contexts have dealt with issues of quality with particular reference to quality in teaching.

CHAPTER THREE: NATIONAL CONTEXT: POLICIES AND EXPECTED PRACTICES REVIEWED

3.1 Introduction

In Chapter Two, the literature review reflects the quality context in a higher education environment globally, together with what has been documented as quality practices in teaching and how quality in higher education has been conceptualised. This review of the literature led to a need to review the policy documents in order, firstly, to understand the measures and arrangements which have been put in place at national and institutional levels to assure and enhance quality in teaching, secondly, to elaborate on the national and institutional context and, thirdly, to understand how quality has been conceptualised in the policy documents. Understanding the measures at national and institutional levels takes into consideration the assertion by Zaki and Rashidi (2013) that quality must be targeted religiously as a matter of principle by the concerned authority, which can be the State. Policies play an important role in outlining the priorities of the government and the various sectors within higher education.

The State 'steers' higher education institutions from a distance through a range of policy mechanisms (Blackmore, 2009). Higher education policy deals with problems such as increasing access to higher education and redressing imbalances of the past. Policy can act as a way of redressing imbalances provided it is grounded in an understanding of the needs of the disadvantaged group and is context specific (Jabareen & Vilkomerson, 2014). Higher education policies are introduced in order to ensure that the higher education institutions are accountable to the public in terms of fulfilling their mandate through their policies and practices. Higher education policy can also guide and standardise quality practices (Dube, 2011). Hence, policy directly or indirectly affects daily lives (Anderson, 2003).

Most policies in higher education are developed in relation to public policy making (Scott, 2017). Public policy is introduced for accountability purposes (Miller & McTavish, 2014), to ascertain if the sector is actually doing what it is meant to do and in order to deal with a particular problem (Anderson, 1997). The emphasis is on the identification of problems, the selection of policy options and the evaluation of policy (Scott, 2017). Policy review and

evaluation in particularly is important to establish whether it is achieving the outcomes for which it was designed (Miller & McTavish 2014).

Anderson (2003) classifies policies into:

Substantive and procedural policies are concerned with what the government is going to do and how it will go about it.

Distributive policies are policies dealing with allocation of resources, services and benefits to a population or a particular group.

Regulatory policies are aimed at protecting the public by restricting individuals' and groups' behaviour.

Self-regulatory policies are put in place by a particular organisation, body or institution to regulate its members or control particular matters within a group.

Redistributive policies are aimed at redistributing resources in order to address societal problems and to shift allocation from the haves to the have-nots.

This chapter focuses on substantive, procedural and regulatory policies in the South African higher education sector. Thereafter, Chapter Four reviews the institutional self-regulatory policies.

National policy differs from institutional policy in that at national level, policies are designed to address problems faced by the sector and are designed to protect the public. It provides guidelines to institutions on how to deal with particular issues. At institutional level the policy guidelines provided at national level are to be articulated into detailed expected practices. Furthermore, according to the current autonomous status of higher education institutions in South Africa, institutions are at liberty to design their own policies in line with their mission, vision and objectives which are consistent with the national policies.

As stated earlier the second reason for reviewing the national and institutional policies is that this research is situated in a historical context, making it important to discuss the sequence of events and policy changes which have led to the current situation (Ridley, 2012) with regard to academics and their practices. Chapters Three and Four act as context elaborators because understanding the published policies which relate to quality in teaching and learning, can assist in understanding more about the South African higher education sector and about

SAUT as an institution. This knowledge could assist in understanding what informs the practices implemented by academics who were participants in this study, thus establishing an understanding of the relationship (or lack thereof) between policy and practice. Furthermore if the main reward of an academic is promotion (Council on Higher Education, 2015, p. 21), it is important to ascertain to what extent the expected quality practices at national and institutional level, are linked to promotion.

Different authors have viewed the relationship between policy and practice in various ways. For instance, Sutherland (2007) notes the value of policy in improving teaching and learning practices. However, Jansen (2002) argues that there is a gap between policy and practice. It is thus important to understand policies in place before unpacking the practices reported by academics. This could assist in theorising on the relationship between policy and practice in a South African University of Technology context with particular reference to quality in teaching.

Unpacking the expected practices stated in the policy documents would also assist in understanding what has been set at national level as quality benchmarks in South African higher education institutions and to understand how these benchmarks at national level have (or have not) infiltrated to institutional level and how academics go about attempting to meet those benchmarks at their level. The focus on the national level in this chapter is because the national policy context can have direct implications within institutions, faculties and departments (Leibowitz, et al. 2017). Government can externally stimulate quality (Kagondu & Marwa, 2017).

The national policy documents to be reviewed in this chapter were selected because of their focus on quality in teaching in particular in the higher education sector. After the policy documents were selected, they were grouped into the three eras representing quality initiatives in the South African higher education sector. This national policy review chapter, reviews policies related to teaching in higher education developed at national level from the 90s after the democratic elections of 1994 up to 2014.

Examples from other countries such as Scotland, China and Australia are used in this chapter to illustrate different approaches taken by other countries in an attempt to ensure and enhance quality in teaching. It is not the aim of this chapter to provide in-depth comparisons between

the various countries. The aim is to focus on the higher education policies in South Africa and at SAUT as an institution in terms of what the policies refer to as quality practices and to later provide insights on the implementation of policies by academics.

The chapter first describes the quality initiatives at national level. The initiatives represent the journey which has been travelled in South Africa in an attempt to assure and enhance quality in teaching. It explains the expected quality practices stated in the documents. The chapter proceeds to the conceptions of quality stated in the national policy documents. This is to provide an explanation of how the notion of quality has been dealt with at national level through the publication of various policy documents and how these notions link to the notions of quality which were presented in Chapter Two. Understanding how quality is conceptualised at national level will also assist in understanding how the institution conceptualises quality, how academics conceptualise quality, what informs these conceptions and how conceptions of quality inform (or do not inform) practice.

3.2 Quality initiatives in the South African Higher Education Sector

This section is arranged in chronological order so that the main events and the policies developed in a particular space of time (Rule & John, 2011) are discussed. The South African Higher Education sector has witnessed extensive changes more especially after the democratic elections which took place in 1994. These changes intended to redress the past injustices and inequalities (Vithal, 2016), and have resulted in initiatives intended to enhance and assure the quality in teaching. The initiatives represent the evolution of quality in the South African national context and will be described in terms of three eras. Prior to the democratic elections in 1994, the higher education sector in South Africa under the apartheid laws was categorised by race divisions and disparities in terms of quality in the various institutions. Institutions (particularly traditional universities) were left to safeguard the quality on their own.

After the dawn of democracy, the sector went through various eras. The three eras after 1994 as described in this study, are called:

- *The development and setting up era (first era)*

- *The quality assurance era (second era)*
- *The quality assurance, promotion and enhancement era (third era)*

The different eras are described in this section in relation to the different policy documents related to quality in teaching which were published in that particular era.

3.2.1 The development and setting up era (1994-2002)

After the democratic elections in 1994, the higher education sector in South Africa had to relook at its operations. The aim was to uphold the values and goals held by the newly democratic South African government post the apartheid period. The apartheid period marked a higher education system which was differentiated in terms of delivery of education, race, ethnicity, geography and social class (Boughey, 2004; Strydom & Strydom, 2004). During this period, some racial groups were prohibited from entering some geographical areas and higher education institutions were no exception to these exclusions with access to higher education designed to benefit the privileged group. Therefore, plans had to be put in place to redress the imbalances created by apartheid laws. Hence there was then a need to set a new agenda after 1994 and a need for policy formulation at government level to change the sector. Policies had to be put in place for transforming the higher education system as a whole in order to reflect the changes that were taking place in the country. A number of initiatives were introduced to 'massage' the system (Sutherland, 2007), in order to heal from the past and pave a way forward.

One of the initiatives included increasing access to students who were previously discriminated against and were prohibited from entering some higher education institutions which were exclusively for whites. The plan was also to assure quality and to regulate the higher education sector whilst widening access. As discussed in Chapter One section 1.3.2, the South African Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 made provision for the formation of the CHE and the HEQC (Hay & Herselman, 2001). The CHE was formed during the *first era*, whereby the higher education sector had to reinvent itself. Through the development of various policies, a foundation was laid for the CHE and the HEQC (Sutherland, 2007), to deal with issues facing the sector, including quality. The CHE is the most prolific of the generators of documents related to quality in higher education institutions at national level.

Meanwhile institutional mergers were also initiated as proposed in the 2001 National Plan on Higher Education. The institutional mergers (see Chapter One) were initiated at national level in the *first era* with the exception of one being a voluntary merger. The mergers resulted in institutions becoming bigger in size and enrolments increased. Furthermore, in the setting up era, various legislative and policy documents were published by the CHE, DoE, DHET and the HEQC as means of widening access in South African higher education institutions and as measures of assuring quality. This was to safeguard standards in public institutions. In this *first era* (1994-2002), various documents were then published to regulate the higher education sector. Examples of these documents were the 'Higher Education Act 101 of 1997' (RSA, 1997), the 'Education White Paper 3 of 1997' (Department of Education, 1997), the 'National Plan on Higher Education' (MoE, 2001), the 'HEQC Founding Document' (2001a) and the 'Framework for Improving Teaching and Learning Project' (Council on Higher Education, 2001b).

In order to understand what is contained in the policy documents and to understand what is regarded as quality in teaching at national level, one document published in this *first era* is reviewed for the purpose of this study. This is because the document, relates directly to teaching and learning. This document was called 'A Framework for Improving Teaching and Learning Project' (Council on Higher Education, 2001b) and it was developed to address the HEQC's concern around teaching and learning in higher education (Luckett, 2006). This was a project that was aimed at developing teaching practices and to serve as a guide for good practice to be used mainly by academics (CHE, 2001). This document was later used to inform the Criteria for Programme Accreditation (CHE, 2004a) as well as the Criteria for Institutional Audits (CHE, 2004b) documents published in the *second era*.

3.2.2 The quality assurance era (2003-2006)

The *second era* in the South African higher education sector was the *quality assurance era*. This era addressed concerns regarding the quality in higher education institutions, especially after the institutional mergers. Quality concerns also related to increasing access to higher education which resulted in increased student numbers. During this period, starting in 2003, some institutions had merged and some were in the process of merging. However, the focus

was mainly on quality assurance, with the aim of prescribing to higher education institutions what constitutes quality in the different areas. This assurance era 'kicked in' irrespective of the institutions that were still in the process of merging. During this second era, the HEQC produced documents to provide clarity regarding what they expected during the national programme accreditations and during the national institutional audits which were to take place at the same time with institutional mergers. This was in the form of external quality assurance, usually conducted by external agencies and the common forms are audits and accreditations (Skolnik, 2010). External quality assurance includes institutional and programme accreditations and institutional audits (Nabaho, et al. 2016).

Hence, during this *second era* the CHE identified a need to re-accredit the Masters in Business Administration (MBA) programmes in the country. The 'MBA Re-accreditation Manual' (Council on Higher Education, 2003) was then published. Thereafter the 'Criteria for Programme Accreditations' (Council on Higher Education, 2004a) together with the 'Framework for Programme Accreditations' were published. The programme re-accreditations were in order for the HEQC to fulfil its mandate of evaluating quality in the programmes offered by higher education institutions and to protect students from poor quality and from being exploited by higher education institutions. The 'Criteria for Programme Accreditations' was used when accrediting new programmes and for re-accreditation of existing ones. The programme accreditations aimed to judge the effectiveness of the institutional processes in ensuring quality and to ascertain whether the programme is in line with the agenda which was set up in the *first era*. The 'Criteria for Programme Accreditation' (Council on Higher Education, 2004a) provided minimum standards for academic programmes and guided institutions in preparing their self-evaluation reports. It further guided institutions in reflecting on their current quality management arrangements for their programmes in order to make recommendations for improvement. In addition to ensuring quality, through the programme accreditation process, the HEQC aimed to increase graduation rates, throughput rates and retention in academic programmes especially for underprepared students (Council on Higher Education, 2004a). Sutherland (2007) notes that policy makers have been able to influence institutions to increase throughput rates. Thus the publication of documents related to programme re-accreditations was an example of the national level influencing institutions to improve graduation rates amongst other things.

Programme re-accreditations

After the publication of these documents, the HEQC undertook the first national programme accreditation which were the MBA re-accreditations carried out by the HEQC nationally. The MBA re-accreditations are highlighted in this study because they were the first national accreditations in South Africa. Furthermore, the programmes offered at SAUT campus X are business related. Although this study focuses on quality in teaching in undergraduate programmes, the MBA re-accreditation documents are used to understand the expected quality practices at national level.

After the MBA re-accreditations were carried out, the HEQC published a document on 'The State of Provision of the MBA in South Africa' (Council on Higher Education, 2004d). The MBA re-accreditation was a rigid process which had serious consequences such as the closing down of some MBA programmes, which did not meet the quality requirements. On completion of this process, seven MBAs were granted full accreditation, 15 granted conditional accreditation and 15 were de-accredited (Council on Higher Education, 2004d).

Since the MBA re- accreditations, other national programme reviews conducted by the HEQC have been the Teacher Education programme reviews in 2006, Social Work programme reviews and the Bachelor of Law programmes. The most recent national programme accreditation is the Bachelor of Law (LLB) which was conducted in 2015. The review of the Bachelor of Law programmes was to strengthen the quality of law education in South African universities (Council on Higher Education, 2017). In the case of the Bachelor of Law programmes, 13 institutions were given re-accreditation, subject to meeting specific conditions and four were given notice of withdrawal (Council on Higher Education, 2017).

The Bachelor of Social Work was the first accreditation to go online. The re-accreditation of the Bachelor of Social Work at national level also proved to be a rigid process resulting in nine fully re-accredited programmes; two accredited with conditions; one was given notice of withdrawal of accreditation; and four institutions offering the Bachelor of Social Work were de-accredited (www.che.ac.za).

The Bachelor of Education re-accreditations were guided by the 'Criteria and Minimum Standards for BEd Programmes' (Council on Higher Education, 2006). After the BEd reviews had taken place, a 'Report on the National Review of Academic and Professional Programmes in Education' was published (Council on Higher Education, 2010b). In this report, it emanated that six BEd programmes were given full accreditation, five received conditional accreditations and four were conditional accreditation with notice of withdrawal (Council on Higher Education, 2010b).

These programme accreditations that have taken place are an indication that the *second era* in the South African higher education sector marked the seriousness of the CHE and the HEQC about quality in higher education programmes. In all these programme re-accreditations, there was a focus on quality in teaching and learning. There were also a number of documents published during this *second era*. However for the purposes of this study, documents published during the assurance era which will be reviewed are the 'Criteria for Programme Accreditations', the 'MBA Re-accreditation Manual' and the 'Criteria for BEd Programmes'. These documents were selected to be reviewed because they address the practices to be implemented by academics. Another important document which is reviewed in this chapter and was published during the assurance era is the 'Improving Teaching and Learning Resources' (Council on Higher Education, 2004c). This document also informed the 'Criteria for Programme Accreditation' (Council on Higher Education, 2004a). It is an important document because it originated from the 'Framework for Improving Teaching and Learning Project' (Council on Higher Education, 2001b) document which was published in the *first era* as stated in the previous section.

Institutional Audits

During the *second era*, in the year 2004, the HEQC also embarked on the first cycle of institutional audits. This first cycle of institutional audits was guided by the 'Criteria for Institutional Audits' (Council on Higher Education, 2004b), which identified the domains (Luckett, 2003) to be audited namely teaching and learning, research and community engagement. The institutional audits concentrated more on accountability than on improvement, with the focus on validity, reliability and credibility of the self-assessment and self-evaluation reports from the institutions (Mammen, 2006). Institutional audits were critiqued as instruments of accountability rather than as drivers of quality (Luckett, 2006;

Dhunpath, et al. 2016). Therefore despite institutional audits there was still a need for focusing on improving quality in teaching and learning.

When the institutional audits started in 2004, institutions were required to compile self-evaluation reports. When conducting institutional audits, the HEQC validated the self-evaluation reports with specific reference to the core areas. This was done by means of establishing which policies, systems, resources and strategies existed in institutions for assuring and enhancing quality in teaching and learning, research and community engagement (Council on Higher Education, 2004b). In quality audits the evaluation focuses on the procedures and methods the institution has in place to assure quality (Skolnik, 2010). However, in an Ethiopian context Tadesse (2014) notes that the audit culture governing academics can result in a decline in quality. In the South African context, the HEQC combines both improvement and accountability purposes of quality assurance (Luckett, 2007).

The reports arising from the institutional audits were published per institution on the CHE website. These reports contained areas where the institution was commended for good practices in teaching and learning, research and community engagement. The reports also contained recommendations and suggestions for improvement in these areas. Although the assurance process aimed to assure quality and transform the higher education sector, it was noted by Quinn and Boughey (2009) that it was unlikely to bring about the necessary change. Furthermore, there were questions about whether these audits could focus on the core academic processes of the institution (Botha, Favish & Stephenson, 2008). Similarly to programme accreditations, institutional audits also took place whilst some institutions were in the process of merging. While one of the aims of the institutional mergers was to increase quality in higher education, the effect of the mergers was uneven and it is debatable whether these mergers yielded a positive change or not (Council on Higher Education, 2015). It can be noted that the publication and the use of criteria documents during programme accreditations and institutional audits is an indication that at national level, quality was seen to be something which could be measured using pre-determined criteria.

In this national policy review chapter, the following documents are reviewed:

-‘MBA re-accreditation Manual’ (Council on Higher Education, 2003)

-‘Criteria for Programme Accreditations’ (Council on Higher Education, 2004a)
-‘Criteria for Institutional Audits’ (Council on Higher Education, 2004b)
-‘Improving Teaching and Learning Resources’ (Council on Higher Education, 2004c)
-‘Criteria and Minimum Standards for BEd. Programmes’ (Council on Higher Education, 2006)

Other documents such as ‘The State of the Provision of the MBA in South Africa’, (Council on Higher Education, 2004d) and the ‘Report on the National Review of Academic and Professional Programmes in Education’ (Council on Higher Education, 2010b) are used only for reference purposes.

3.2.3 The quality assurance, improvement and enhancement era (2007-2014)

After the first cycle of institutional audits was completed, the publication of the institutional audit reports per institution led to the higher education sector in South Africa, moving into the current *third era*. During the institutional audits, the HEQC noted that there were major challenges regarding teaching and learning and student success. These challenges were published in the document called a ‘Framework for the Second Cycle of Quality Assurance 2012-2014’ (Council on Higher Education, 2011a). This document states that there were some examples of good teaching in some institutions but in others “students were experiencing poor quality lecturing, absent lecturers and generally erratic and inadequate student support” (Council on Higher Education, 2011a, p. 9). The HEQC then proposed that the second cycle of institutional audits should focus on teaching and learning. In this consultation document, it was stated that particular attention will be paid to:

> *.....what constitute obstacles to the improvement of teaching and learning at different layers of the institution and how these are eliminated or entrenched by policies affecting higher education institutions* (Council on Higher Education, 2011a, p. 15)

After the publication of this consultation document there was concern regarding the time and the resources needed to embark on the second cycle of institutional audits (Council on Higher

Education, 2014). The focus then moved into one core function of higher education institutions which is teaching instead of looking at all three functions together, as had been the case with the programme re-accreditations and institutional audits. This period marked the evaluation of the effectiveness of the first cycle of institutional audits leading to the introduction of the QEP project (see Chapter One). There was thus a decision taken that there should be a QEP project as an alternative to institutional audits. The second round of institutional audits was not implemented in the same way as the first. Instead, the HEQC launched the QEP project (Leibowitz, et al. 2017). The QEP project was introduced to focus only on teaching and learning as it required "immediate attention" (Council on Higher Education, 2014, p. 2). The aim was to "enhance all aspects of teaching and learning" (Council on Higher Education, 2014, p. ii) for the purpose of improving student success. Another reason for the introduction of the QEP project, stated in the foreword of the document called the 'Content Analysis of the Baseline Institutional Submissions for Phase One' of the Quality Enhancement Project was:

> *The institutional audits did put teaching and learning on the agenda, but they also revealed that much work towards improving quality in teaching and learning was needed given the context of a predominantly undergraduate higher education system with consistently poor throughput rates* (Council on Higher Education, 2015, p. 12).

Thus the higher education system in South Africa is currently in the *assurance, improvement and enhancement era,* focusing on quality in teaching and learning. Phase One of the QEP project initiated in 2015, the initiation of phase two started in 2017. Quality assurance is not completely disregarded in this era, as the programme re-accreditations are continuing. Quality enhancement is strengthened through the QEP project as outlined in a publication called the 'Framework for Institutional Quality Enhancement in the Second Period of Quality Assurance' (Council on Higher Education, 2014). Moreover, the presence of the words 'quality assurance' in the title of this document is an indication that assurance is not totally disregarded. Hence there is a move and a narrowing of focus from the first institutional audits focusing on the three areas to the QEP mainly focusing on undergraduate teaching and learning. The QEP project is also a move into strengthening quality enhancement in the sector since it is about deliberate, continuous, systematic and measurable improvement (Council on Higher Education, 2014), whereas the second era concentrated on whether standards were being met, relating mostly to quality assurance.

The QEP was introduced with the main aim of addressing the challenge of low throughput, low participation and high attrition rates in undergraduate education and thus improving student success in the country. The main focus of the QEP project is "on the improvement of undergraduate teaching and learning, by asking what we do, how we do it and why" (Council on Higher Education, 2014, p. 10). The purpose is "to bring about improvements in teaching and learning at the level of both the higher education sector as a whole and of the individual institutions" (Council on Higher Education, 2014, p. 14).

The 'Framework for Institutional Quality Enhancement in the Second Period of Quality Assurance' states that the QEP project is the "interplay between nationally coordinated activities and activities at institutional level" (Council on Higher Education, 2014, p.14). This is a move to enhance the relationship between national and institutional levels. The 'Framework for Institutional Quality Enhancement in the Second Period of Quality Assurance' (Council on Higher Education, 2014) further highlights the issues which were identified in the first cycle of institutional audits as having a positive effect on student success. These issues are teaching, curriculum, assessment, learning resources, student enrolment management, student support and development and non-academic support and development. Hence, Phase One of the QEP project has the following focus areas: enhancing academics as university teachers; enhancing course and programme enrolment management; enhancing student support and development; and enhancing the learning environment. Having the first focus area as enhancing academics as university teachers is an indication of the importance of focusing on academics in issues of quality in teaching. In the QEP project, institutions have had to report on how they are enhancing academics as teachers (Vithal, 2016).

The CHE, when developing the QEP project for South Africa drew heavily on the experience of the Scottish system (Shaikh, et al. 2017) which is managed by the Scottish Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) and the Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee (SHEEC). Scotland has had a quality enhancement project since 2003 with the aim of developing a culture of quality enhancement in learning and teaching through partnerships with staff, students and other stakeholders (Council on Higher Education, 2014). In some countries, the move towards quality enhancement is a way to reinstate trust in institutions (Rosa, et al. 2012) since competition has led to insufficient trust in the standards of higher

education (Kettunen, 2008). Thus South Africa is not the first country to incorporate quality enhancement. The South African QEP project, although globally diffused (Jarvis, 2014) and modelled from Scotland, was adjusted to address the problems faced by the South African higher education institutions. Hence the approach is borrowed (Tang & Hussin, 2013) from a developed country. However, it has been questioned whether the quality enhancement-based approach could be replicated across the entire system (Brown, 2012). The QEP is an inductive process, whereby public institutions in South Africa are asked to submit reports regarding the practices they currently have in place at institutional level concerning how they enhance quality in teaching and learning in the different focus areas which have been prioritised as focus areas for Phase One.

On receipt of the reports from institutions regarding the four Phase One focus areas, information from across the institutions was analysed to ascertain good practices and problem areas (Council on Higher Education, 2014). Furthermore a number of workshops have been held related to each focus area. There have also been institutional visits by the CHE. Thereafter feedback from the HEQC was given to different institutions in order to share good practices identified across the institutions with the aim of giving institutions opportunities to improve in the different focus areas prioritised under Phase One. After improvement plans related to Phase One were submitted to the HEQC, then the focus moved to implementation of Phase Two in 2017. Phase Two focuses on one focus area which is curriculum.

In addition to the QEP project in the *third era*, a South African Technology Network (SATN) was formed. One of the objectives of this network is to promote academic quality by building strong Universities of Technology (SATN, information brochure). SATN was established to address issues related to teaching and learning in UoTs (Leibowitz, et al. 2017). The network further aims to influence the development of national policies in relation to the nature and character of a UoT (Nzimande, 2014). During this *third era*, there has also been a special focus on Work Integrated Learning (WIL), with a publication of the document called 'Work Integrated Learning Good Practice Guide' (Council on Higher Education, 2011b) as one of the ways of enhancing quality. Therefore, there has been an extended focus on quality in teaching, on UoTs and on WIL in the current improvement and enhancement era as compared to the first two eras discussed in the previous sections.

Prior to the introduction of the QEP project in this current *third era*, there have been various documents focused on quality improvement and quality assurance in teaching and learning,

for instance, the Framework for Qualification Standards (Council on Higher Education, 2011) and the White Paper for Post School Education and Training (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013). The documents published in the third era reviewed in this study are:

- 'Framework for Qualification Standards in Higher Education' (Council on Higher Education, 2011)

-'White Paper for Post School Education and Training' (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013)

-'Framework for Institutional Quality Enhancement in the Second Period of Quality Assurance' (Council on Higher Education, 2014).

Other documents published in this era, will be used for reference purposes, for example the 'Framework for Second cycle of Quality Assurance 2012-2017' (Council on Higher Education, 2011a), 'Work Integrated Learning Good Practice Guide' (Council on Higher Education, 2011b) and the 'Content Analysis of the Baseline Institutional Submissions for Phase One of the Quality Enhancement Project' (Council on Higher Education, 2015).

In concluding this section on the developments which have taken place in the South African higher education sector, in an attempt to improve quality in teaching, I present a summary of the national documents published in the three eras which are related to quality in teaching. Table 3 presents only the documents which are reviewed in this chapter with the aim to highlight the expected quality practices in teaching at national level as stated in the different policy documents. In total, nine national documents were reviewed in this national policy review chapter. Documents cited in this chapter but not included in this list are only used for strengthening a particular point.

Era	Name of the document	Year published
First era	'Framework for Improving Teaching and Learning Project'	(Council on Higher Education, 2001b)
Second era	'MBA Re-accreditation Manual'	(Council on Higher Education, 2003)
Second era	'Improving Teaching and Learning Resources'	(Council on Higher Education, 2004c)
Second era	'Criteria for Programme Accreditation'	(Council on Higher Education, 2004a)
Second era	'Criteria for Institutional Audits'	(Council on Higher Education, 2004b)
Second era	'Criteria and Minimum Standards for BEd Programme'	(Council on Higher Education, 2006)
Third era	'A Framework for Qualification Standards in Higher Education'	(Council on Higher Education, 2011)
Third era	'White Paper for Post-School Education and Training'	(Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013)
Third era	'Framework for Institutional Quality Enhancement in the Second Period of Quality Assurance'	(Council on Higher Education, 2014)

Table 3 National documents reviewed

The next section unpacks the quality practices directly related to academics on the ground as documented in the national policy documents. This is to move the focus on quality in teaching to the "*different levels*" of the institution.

3.3 Synthesis of the expected quality practices in teaching expected nationally

As represented in Table 3 in the previous section, a number of documents have been published at national level to assure, promote and enhance quality in teaching in South African Higher Education institutions. This section reviews the expected practices articulated in the national policy documents related to quality in teaching. When reviewing these national policy documents, a number of expected practices in teaching were prominent across

the nine documents reviewed. It became evident that these practices are related to nine aspects of quality in teaching:

Programme design
Teaching
Peer evaluation
Assessment
Professional development
Student recruitment, selection and enrolment
Student support
Student evaluation of teaching and surveys to different stakeholders
Reviews and evaluations

These are arranged according to how many documents refer to each practice. All nine documents deal with programme design, teaching practices and assessment practices and peer evaluation practices whereas only three out of the nine documents address student evaluations, surveys as well as reviews and evaluations. Appendix A summarises which expected practices are discussed in which documents at national level. The policy review reveals how at national level, these expected practices have been dealt with, how they relate to the work of academics on the ground and how academics are to engage with these practices.

The following discussion emanates from Appendix A which is a comparison of how the national policy documents address issues concerning to quality in teaching in relation to each practice. The discussion describes and gives an indication of what academics are expected to do to assure and enhance quality in teaching. In sections 3.3.1 to 3.3.9 that follow, each category of the practice is explained, followed by a discussion of its importance. Thereafter a summary of the expected practices in that particular category is provided, followed by a detailed explanation on how each expected practice is discussed across the various national documents.

3.3.1 Designing the programme

The 'Criteria for Programme Accreditation' defines a programme as a "purposeful set of learning experiences that leads to a qualification" (Council on Higher Education, 2004a, p. 36). Proper conceptualisation and design of the programme are important steps towards achieving high quality (Council on Higher Education, 2004a) given the relationship between programme design and quality in teaching and learning (Council on Higher Education, 2010b). Academics need to pay attention to practices related to programme design.

With this background in mind, it was not surprising to note that the characteristics of the programme as well as the quality practices related to programme design are regarded as important at national level, in the various national policy documents reviewed. Programme design is articulated in all nine national policy documents reviewed across the three eras. In summary, the policy documents discuss programme characteristics such as the ability of the programme to meet the national requirements, the intellectual credibility of the programme, the coherence of the programme, articulation arrangements, programme's alignment with the mission of the institution and the ability of the programme to meet the needs of the various stakeholders. The expected practices include the incorporation of students' placements during programme design as well as communicating with other institutions when designing the programme. The policy documents further reveal that there should be plans in place for enhancing employability of the students during programme design and there should be consistent monitoring to ensure relevance of the programme. Hence academics should be able to construct educationally sound curricula.

In the first, second and third eras, the expectations were that the design the programme should meet the national requirements pertaining to programmes (Council on Higher Education, 2004a) and should meet the requirements of the HEQF (now called HEQSF, see Chapter One) (Council on Higher Education, 2003). The programme should be designed in such a way that there is coherence in the programme (Council on Higher Education, 2001b; Council on Higher Education, 2004a; Council on Higher Education, 2004b), between the programme outcomes and the scope of the learning materials, and there is a link between the different years of study (Council on Higher Education, 2014). The programme design should

consider issues of articulation (Council on Higher Education, 2003; Council on Higher Education, 2004a; Council on Higher Education, 2004b) without compromising coherence of the modules. The programme should be in line with the mission of the institution (Council on Higher Education, 2004a) and should align with the curriculum of the institution (Council on Higher Education, 2003). Furthermore, the programme should be intellectually credible (Council on Higher Education, 2006) and intellectually challenging:

> *South African higher education institutions therefore have an enormously challenging task. They must intellectually engage students from a wide range of socio-economic and academic backgrounds while helping them to develop as whole human beings who will be personally enriched and able to contribute to society* (Council on Higher Education, 2014, p. 8).

The programme must have an acceptable level of academic challenge, this is central to quality (Strydom & Mentz, 2010).

The national policy documents state that programme design should meet the needs of the different stakeholders (Council on Higher Education, 2001b; Council on Higher Education, 2004a; Council on Higher Education, 2004b; Council on Higher Education, 2004c) and that stakeholders should make an input in programme design. These stakeholders include internal and external stakeholders (See Chapter Two). With respect to external stakeholders, professional associations need to be taken into consideration as they "guide and support good practice in teaching and learning" (Council on Higher Education, 2011, p. 6). Professional bodies also accredit programmes in conjunction with the CHE. In some cases professional bodies recognise training in areas of teaching and learning (Leibowitz, et al. 2017). The expectation with regards to professional bodies is that institutions provide proof of accreditation in the case of the programme being accredited by a professional body:

> *If accredited by any other body or in the process of applying for accreditation, please provide details of the accreditation body, date of accreditation or application and any other details* (Council on Higher Education, 2003, p. 19).

The standards developed by the CHE and standards developed by professional bodies are to be aligned (Council on Higher Education, 2011) and the programme should also be relevant

to other stakeholders (Council on Higher Education, 2001b; 2003; 2004a; 2004b; 2004c). The programme should meet the requirements of employers (Council on Higher Education, 2004c) and there should be a close relationship between education providers and employers (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013).

There should be practical workplace experience (Council on Higher Education, 2003) and when designing the programme there should be consideration about placements of students in the workplace. Placements are prioritised at national level, as illustrated during BEd programme reviews where the expectation was that students were given opportunity for teaching practice in schools and that these placements were monitored (Council on Higher Education, 2006). This could be applicable to any programme which places students in the workplace. There should be learning contracts between the higher education institution and the employers with the work placement being well structured and the roles and responsibilities of the various parties clearly articulated (Council on Higher Education, 2004b). Emphasis should be placed on ways to monitor WIL placements (Council on Higher Education, 2004a) during programme design as one of the ways of enhancing quality. It is of concern however that the report on the review of the BEd programmes noted a lack of consensus regarding quality issues in the work based learning and that "work based learning is very uneven and represents significant challenges to quality in the sector" (Council on Higher Education, 2010b, p. 94). Similarly, it has been noted that these placements are often unstructured and do not contribute to the outcomes of the qualification (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013). These points are concerning because the WIL component in a programme should increase employment opportunities (Council on Higher Education, 2011) and has the potential to enhance quality in teaching.

During programme design, there should be plans for enhancing the employability of students, as students come to the higher education sector to increase their chances of securing employment. The focus on student employability is evident in the second and third eras. The 'Criteria for Programme Accreditation' states that:

> *The programme should contribute to enhancing the employability of students and alleviating shortages of expertise in relevant fields, in cases where these are desired outcomes of the programme* (Council on Higher Education, 2004a, p. 23)

There should be constant monitoring in order to ensure relevance (Council on Higher Education, 2003) of the programme to employers and to the needs of the country. When designing the programme, there should be a balance of theoretical, practical and experiential knowledge and skills (Council on Higher Education, 2001b; 2003; 2004a; 2004c). Equipping students with appropriate skills as one of the ways of enhancing quality was also highlighted in the literature review (Chapter Two). Likewise it is also expected that there should be alignment with development of graduate attributes (Council on Higher Education, 2014) during programme design.

Programme design also includes design of proper learning materials (Council on Higher Education, 2003). Procedures and processes for developing and evaluating materials should be put in place (Council on Higher Education, 2004a) and there should be systems for materials development and curriculum development (Council on Higher Education, 2006). During programme design, there should be constant communication with other institutions regarding the structure of the programme (Council on Higher Education, 2004a).

In the UK, there are expectations that all UK higher education institutions should meet when designing the programme and the curriculum (Quality Assurance Agency, 2015). Programme design is an essential part of quality assurance and enhancement (Quality Assurance Agency, 2013a). Scotland in particular has an employability theme as one of the enhancement themes. This includes a focus on developing skills and attributes of the graduates to make them more employable. There is also a dedicated project for developing graduate attributes under the research-teaching linkages enhancement theme in Scotland. This is to further enhance employability of students. On another continent, China similarly insists that higher education institutions in the country should have a market driven curriculum (Li, 2010).

3.3.2 Teaching students

This section refers to the actual teaching and learning process (Council on Higher Education, 2001b). Across the different national policy documents and across the three eras, all nine national policy documents which were reviewed highlight expected teaching practices. These are in respect of using effective teaching methods and strategies as quality practices in

teaching in higher education.

In summary, the national policy review, revealed that practices related to teaching strategies should include: the use of appropriate teaching strategies, matching the teaching strategies and teaching methods with the type of students who are registered in the programme, matching teaching strategies with the course outcomes, ensuring the feasibility of the teaching strategies as well as the availability of resources. There should also be different modes of delivery and the course material and study guides should be in line with the mode of delivery. Additionally, the mode of delivery should be in line with the South African context and with recent developments in teaching. Another expectation is that there is student involvement in teaching, such involvement being termed active learning or proactive learning. Academics should also teach content which is accurate and up-to-date and teaching strategies should be continuously monitored for improvement.

In explaining the expected practices in detail, it should be noted that the use of appropriate teaching and learning methods and approaches is linked to quality (Council on Higher Education, 2006). The expectation in the 'Criteria for Programme Accreditation' document is that there should be:

> *Mechanisms to ensure teaching and learning methods are appropriate for the design and use of learning materials and instructional and learning technology* (Council on Higher Education, 2004a, p. 11).

The pedagogic approaches used should be underpinned by educational philosophy and the knowledge of approaches that promote student learning (Council on Higher Education, 2014). Higher education institutions should use recent developments and techniques in teaching (Council on Higher Education, 2003, 2004a) and there should be ongoing discussions on innovations in teaching (Council on Higher Education, 2004b), including the use of technology in teaching, which is also noted as a quality practice in Chapter Two. However the 'White Paper for Post School Education and Training' (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013) cautions against the uncritical use of technology as one of the developments in teaching in that:

> *Teaching and learning interventions using ICT must be carefully planned and implemented. The success of an educational programme will be determined by its pedagogical strength and not by the integration of ICT, which can sometimes be used*

> *poorly or as a gimmick. Furthermore, sufficient capacity is required in terms of financial and human resources. Staff and students require not only meaningful access to technology, but also the ability to use it effectively* (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013, p. 53).

Teaching methods should be based on the profile of the students registered for the course (Council on Higher Education, 2003). This means that there must be a link between teaching methods, strategies used and the recruitment, selection and enrolment of students (See section 3.3.7). There should be performance standards which relate to teaching practices (Council on Higher Education, 2011) and there should be sufficient teaching resources (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013). The delivery of the programme should also be feasible (Council on Higher Education, 2001b), including the different modes of delivery (Council on Higher Education, 2003; Council on Higher Education, 2004a) and quality arrangements to support quality in teaching and learning especially at delivery (Council on Higher Education, 2004b). The course material and study guides should be in line with the mode of delivery (Council on Higher Education, 2003). The national policy documents indicated an expectation to contextualise the teaching methods. This was explicitly stated in the 'Teaching and Learning Resources' (Council on Higher Education, 2004c) document which explains the importance of contextualisation as achieved by:

> *Using appropriate teaching methods, for example, through work-site placements, service learning, community service, project work and South African perspectives in the curriculum.* (Council on Higher Education, 2004c, p. 45).

The teaching strategies used should be monitored and continuously improved. There should be plans to monitor, evaluate impact and effect improvement as well as management the quality of teaching and learning (Council on Higher Education, 2003; 2004). These monitoring plans are a way of developing professionalism amongst academics (Council on Higher Education, 2001b).

There is also an expectation to involve students during teaching (Council on Higher Education, 2003). The 'MBA Re-accreditation Manual' explicitly referred to involving the students actively in the teaching process and proactive learning:

> *Proactive learning is reflected in dialogue-oriented lectures, case studies, group work or interactive learning sessions in the context of management*

simulations and project work (Council on Higher Education, 2003, p. 43).

Proactive learning, active and collaborative learning as teaching strategies were also emphasised in the South African Survey of Student Engagement (Strydom, et al. 2012).

The national policy documents further reveal that university teachers should teach content which is accurate and up to date (Council on Higher Education, 2011).

At international level, the importance of different teaching strategies is emphasised. In Australia, for instance, a University Teaching Criteria and Standards Framework (Australian Government, 2014) was developed. This is in order to assist universities and academics in clarifying what constitutes quality in teaching. China on the other hand, has introduced teaching quality evaluations at national level to evaluate the quality of teaching in Chinese higher education institutions (Li, 2010). Another international example is in the Scottish higher education sector which encourages its institutions to invite industry guests into lecture rooms in order to ensure that the content taught in the university classrooms is relevant and current (Quality Assurance Agency, 2012).

3.3.3 Conducting peer evaluations

For the purposes of this discussion, peer evaluation will refer to academics evaluating one another's work as peers in order to check the quality in teaching, assessments, and programmes. It also refers to academics as peers networking and collaborating. One of the important practices related to quality in teaching relates to the use of peer evaluation.

In summary, peer evaluation practices include peers checking student performance, being involved in the evaluation of the programme, being involved in external and internal moderation as well as external examining. Academics should then address the problems identified during the moderation process and discuss assessment results with peers.

The national policy review indicates that the competency of a peer evaluator is important. This includes a peer reviewer as a specialist in curriculum and assessment processes. In providing a detailed explanation of the expected practices, it is expected that peer reviewers should be subject specialists who are trained in curriculum and assessment (Council on

Higher Education, 2001b). One of the duties of these academic peers is to check student performance (Council on Higher Education, 2004c). In addition to checking students' performances academic peers also need to be involved in the evaluation of programmes. An example of the importance of peer evaluation was noted in the 'Criteria for Institutional Audits':

> *Clear and effective systems are in place (including internal and external peer review) to evaluate programmes on a regular basis* (Council on Higher Education, 2004b, p. 13).

There should be peer evaluation in place when evaluating programmes and there should be procedures to facilitate the quality of internal and external moderation (Council on Higher Education, 2001b) and to ensure the integrity of the qualifications awarded (Council on Higher Education, 2004b). Assessments should be moderated through peer review (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013). It is also expected that moderation, in particular, needs to be implemented in order to ensure that assessments given to students are fair and reliable. Additionally, there should be provision for internal moderation and external examining (Council on Higher Education, 2003) and problems identified from the moderator's report should be addressed. Internal moderation checks are to be undertaken (Council on Higher Education, 2006).

External examination by peers from other institutions is one of the ways of ensuring that standards are being met across the higher education sector (Council on Higher Education, 2011) as well as evaluations by academic peers at national level (Council on Higher Education, 2014). In the practice of moderation, the expectation is that the programme coordinator should monitor the implementation of the improvements suggested during the process of moderation (Council on Higher Education, 2004a). In addition to moderation as a requirement, the 'Framework for Improving Teaching and Learning Project' (Council on Higher Education, 2001b) refers to the importance of discussing assessment results with peers. This could assist in identifying modules or students deemed at risk.

External examining was identified as one of the expectations in the United Kingdoms' quality code (Quality Assurance Agency, 2011). The UK expects the institutions to have policies in place for the nomination and appointment of external examiners. Peer evaluation is central to the Institutional Evaluation Programme in Greece, whereby universities focus on their everyday quality practices (Papadimitriou & Westerheijden, 2011). China on the other hand,

has prioritised peer observation of teaching whereby peers and leaders at different levels observe teaching in the classrooms (Li, 2010).

3.3.4 Assessing students

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process as it is purposefully used to generate data for grading and for providing timely feedback (Council on Higher Education, 2004a). Assessment is essential to programme design and to student and staff development (Council on Higher Education, 2006) and assessment practices are considered as quality practices in teaching in the national policy documents. This is because assessment is linked to teaching and teaching is linked to assessment. Therefore at the center of teaching there is assessment. This section is separated from the section on teaching practices because the various policy documents such as the 'Criteria for Programme Accreditation' (Council on Higher Education, 2004a), 'MBA Re-accreditation Manual' (Council on Higher Education, 2003) and the 'Framework for Qualification Standards' (Council on Higher Education, 2011) at national level, dealt with assessment separately. Dealing with the practices related to teaching and related to assessment separately allows for an in-depth understanding of how each set of practices has been dealt with at national level.

The importance of paying attention to assessment practices is evident in the national policy documents reviewed in this study, throughout the three eras in the South African higher education sector. In summary, assessment is expected to form part of teaching and learning, and to be fair (Council on Higher Education, 2001b; Council on Higher Education, 2014), valid, reliable (Council on Higher Education, 2003, 2004a; 2004c) and challenging. Assessment must be aligned with the outcomes of the module. Furthermore, the policy documents at national level state that there should be a variety of assessments (Council on Higher Education, 2010a). It is also expected that there should be diagnostic, formative and summative assessment (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013; Council on Higher Education, 2014). Attention should be paid to the type and format of assessment questions and the nature of assessment work (Council on Higher Education, 2014). Assessments should be moderated internally and externally with a process of validating results and monitoring student performance by means of monitoring pass rates and throughput rates. Assessment should also be in line with the assessment policy of the

institution. Results of assessments need to be recorded and the security of the assessments be ensured.

Other expectations include the need for validation of assessment results, throughput rates and completion rates (Council on Higher Education, 2001b) and alignment with the institutional assessment policy (Council on Higher Education, 2006).

Institutions should track and monitor student performance and student progress (Council on Higher Education, 2004a) to identify students at risk and academic excellence. Academics are to obtain quantitative data on student performance and graduation rates (Council on Higher Education, 2001b; 2004c). Another expectation regarding assessments is that they should form part of teaching and learning based on an understanding that assessment practices are an integral part of teaching methods and modes of delivery (Council on Higher Education, 2003, Council on Higher Education, 2006). This requirement of linking assessment to teaching and learning was explicit in the 'Criteria for Institutional Audits':

> *Assessment has a critical influence on the quality of teaching and learning and can be used as a powerful point of leverage for change and improvement of education*. (Council on Higher Education, 2004b, p. 5).

The national policy review further reveals that assessments need to be aligned with the outcomes of the programme and module and situated within an appropriate HEQF level (Council on Higher Education, 2011). It is expected that there should also be coherence between assessment and teaching and that assessment must inform curriculum.

After the assessments have been administered, it is also expected that the turnaround time for returning assessments to students should be within an acceptable time which will allow student to benefit from the timeous feedback (Council on Higher Education, 2003; Council on Higher Education, 2004). The literature review in Chapter Two, noted that feedback should be appropriate, clear and consistent and should assist students to improve their learning.

In the UK, timeous feedback on assessments to students has been prioritised in the quality code document where it is identified as feedback practices (Quality Assurance Agency, 2013c). Scotland has assessment as one of its quality enhancement themes. This assessment

theme has subsequently lead to another theme called Integrative Assessment, which is an indication that different types of assessment need to be integrated.

3.3.5 Developing professionally

The issue of staff support and professional development is particularly significant in the South African context. In the third era, Phase One of the QEP project has the enhancement of academics as university teachers as its focus area number one (Council on Higher Education, 2014). In this country, there is a need to educate, support and develop academics in the sector. This includes educating new academics in South Africa who are to join the sector to replace an extensive number of those who are due to retire in the next five years as discussed in Chapter One. Staff competence and effectiveness are critical for quality (Council on Higher Education, 2004a).

Practices related to staff support and professional development are important in discussions about quality as articulated in eight out of the nine documents reviewed. There is evidence of a particular focus on this aspect in the second and the third eras. The document that did not cover this aspect is the 'Framework for Qualification Standards in Higher Education' (Council on Higher Education, 2011) as indicated in Appendix A.

In summary, expected practices related to staff support and professional development in the various policy documents refer to the importance of the development of academics as teachers, competence in teaching, assessment, RPL and research**.** The focus is also on academics' qualifications and experience. Academics should reflect on their practice, understand their pedagogical and assessment practices and participate in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. Policy documents also refer to whether academics are suitable and available to teach in a programme and a need to attend institutional induction programmes. In addition to the expected quality practices, the national documents also state various factors related to the work of an academic that can affect quality. These include workload and conditions of employment, factors also identified in the literature as discussed in Chapter Two. The national documents further pay particular attention to characteristics and skills of academics. What follows is a discussion on what the policies expect from academics in terms of capabilities to teach in higher education and the self-monitoring capacity of academics.

Staff support and professional development practices specifically refer to the national expectations regarding the development of academics as teachers (Council on Higher Education, 2014). As discussed in Chapter Two, this is of great importance in the South African context as academics are employed because of their professional status or experience in industry or research achievements but not because of their ability to teach. Hence academics are expected to understand the pedagogical and assessment practices (Council on Higher Education, 2014) required of university teachers. Furthermore, the national level highlights the importance of academics' qualifications, teaching experience, teaching and assessment competence and the research profile of academics (Council on Higher Education, 2004a; 2006). With regards to qualifications and experience, during the MBA re-accreditations, staff were expected to be qualified and experienced to teach in the programme and to conduct research related to the field of Management. Academics should hence locate themselves in their academic, education and the professional field (CHE, 2011b). Academics are expected to be self-monitoring and to reflect on their practice (Council on Higher Education, 2001b).

Another expectation related to professional development is that new academics should attend a comprehensive institutional induction programme (Council on Higher Education, 2004a). Attendance of induction programmes is for new staff as well as staff who are on probation. However there is a need for ongoing professional development during teaching careers not only at the beginning of their careers (Council on Higher Education, 2015). Institutions need to have staff development initiatives to improve the teaching skills of academics (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013, p. 33).

There is also a focus on the characteristics of an academic as stated in the QEP project:

> *Teaching is affected by the characteristics of the teacher, such as his or her qualifications, experience, proficiency in the language of instruction and knowledge of pedagogies and practices that promote student learning* (Council on Higher Education, 2014, p. 18).

These characteristics encompass:

> *Enthusiasm for one's subject and the ability to motivate students*
> *Respect for students and sensitivity to their levels of understanding*
> *Appropriate expectations and workloads for students*

> *Competence in one's field*
> *Sound preparation, clarity of course requirements and good organisation of the material*
> *Clarity of explanation and the ability to support discussions*
> *Encouragement of independent thoughts in students*
> *Fair assessment procedures and constructive feedback*
>
> (Council on Higher Education, 2004c, p. 13)

Similarly, the literature review identified the importance of the characteristics of university teaching staff. These included proficiency in the language of instruction and having appropriate qualifications as discussed in Chapter Two.

Factors that can have a negative impact on quality include workloads which should be manageable. This was articulated in the 'MBA Re-accreditation Manual' (Council on Higher Education, 2003) which states that:

> *The size of the teaching staff and the contractual arrangements relating to time and work load have to ensure that all teaching, research, learning support and counselling activities relevant to the programme's mission can be realised* (Council on Higher Education, 2003, p. 30)

The quotation above highlights one of the expectations at national level regarding time available to staff to fulfil their duties as well as the importance of careful consideration of manageable workloads by institutions. Escalating workloads could impact on quality in teaching. Contractual arrangements could also impact on quality in teaching, in the case of the ratio between permanent and temporary staff. According to Council on Higher Education, 'Vital Stats' (2013), there are more temporary staff than permanent staff in South African higher education institutions, which could impact quality. An example of the importance of taking workload issues into consideration was captured in the report on the 'National Review of Academic and Professional Programmes in Education' (Council on Higher Education, 2010b) which noted that:

> *Most institutions reported unhappiness with work allocation, with some alarming accounts of excessive workloads. Several panel reports identify this as a significant hindrance to the achievement of acceptable quality in the programme* (Council on Higher Education, 2010b, p. 93).

At international level, there are various responses to the need for professional development. Malaysia, for example, has a Basic Teaching Methodology Course (BTMC) for academics

(Deni, et al. 2014). In the UK there is the UK Higher Education Academy (Patsala & Kefalas, 2016). Japan has a system that can evaluate teacher's performance and development needs (Moodly & Drake, 2016). China, Sweden and Australia, have put in place teacher training programs for academics.

3.3.6 Selecting and enrolling students

For the purposes of this discussion, student enrolment refers to practices which include student recruitment, student selection and student enrolment in higher education institutions. Student enrolment practices include provision of accurate information (Council on Higher Education, 2006). Student selection and enrolment practices determine the quality of the students who enter higher education. Enhancing student enrolment is related to quality as it is one of the focus areas in Phase One of the QEP project (Council on Higher Education, 2014). At SAUT, academics together with administrative staff are responsible for practices related to student enrolment (see Chapter Four). These are challenging practices in the South African context. On the one hand, there is a need to increase access (Council on Higher Education, 2001b) into higher education and increase enrolments (Council on Higher Education, 2004b) taking into consideration the history of the country. On the other hand, students entering higher education must meet the minimum entrance requirements for their selected programmes. Increasing enrolments should be concurrent with increasing quality (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013).

At national level, the policy documents cite the importance of practices related to student enrolment. The national policy documents reviewed in this study are not specific on who is responsible for student recruitment, student selection and student enrolment practices. These practices refer to the marketing of the programme to prospective students, the processing of applications for prospective students, the acceptance and enrolment of students into the programme and maintaining the balance between the students accepted and the capacity available.

The policy review reveals that eight out of the nine policy documents reviewed in this study indicated that student recruitment, selection and enrolment are quality practices related to teaching. These practices cut across the different eras with a strong focus in the second and the third eras. The policy documents reveal that student recruitment, selection and enrolment

should be in line with legislation and the national imperative of widening access, and should be concurrent with improving quality. Means of widening access include introducing access programmes and granting age exemptions. In summary, practices related to student recruitment, selection and enrolment articulated in the national policy documents include marketing and advertising the programme which involves informing students about the admission requirements of the programme. During enrolment, it is expected that evidence is kept about how students are selected. The policy documents further state that students who do not have a chance of succeeding should not be accepted in the programme. The programme should also not enroll more students than the number for which it has the capacity.

In providing a detailed explanation of the expected practices in this category, it is important to note that often the first step in student enrolment includes marketing and advertising the programme. This is proactively communicating to potential students (Council on Higher Education, 2004c). As articulated during the national BEd re-accreditation process, the expectation was that:

> *Enrolment practices include provision of accurate, helpful information – including information about funding opportunities – as well as efficient handling of finance and registration information* (Council on Higher Education, 2006, p. 4).

Providing accurate and helpful information is a crucial step because incorrect information, could affect student's chances of gaining access to higher education. Additionally if students choose an unsuitable programme for them, this could have an effect on the quality in teaching, as they will lack interest and motivation to study. There should therefore be a match between the student and the programme for which they are registered (Council on Higher Education, 2014). Information to be provided to students should also include entrance requirements. Higher education institutions should have minimum admission requirements (Strydom, et al. 2012) which are clearly stated. The selection criteria should be explicit (Council on Higher Education, 2003; 2004a) and students who do not have a good chance of succeeding should not be accepted. The expected practices regarding student enrolment and recruitment became evident during the MBA re-accreditation process, in that the HEQC expected MBA programmes to provide information on how students were admitted into the programme together with the process for marketing and advertising the programme. During the MBA programme re-accreditations, programmes were required to provide information related to admission tests as well as transcripts in the case of selection interviews (Council on Higher Education, 2003).

Another national expectation is that the number of students selected does not exceed the capacity (Council on Higher Education, 2004a), to avoid overcrowding in the classrooms. Institutions and programmes should take into consideration their available resources when enrolling students. Furthermore, institutions should take into consideration the enrolment targets at both national and institutional levels.

Student enrolment practices internationally are taken to be important (Australia, China, USA, UK) because of their impact on quality.

3.3.7 Supporting students

Student support refers to practices in line with assisting students to succeed academically in higher education. Student support should include a range of courses to develop students' skills and knowledge (Council on Higher Education, 2014). The review of the national policy documents indicates that student support and development are practices in teaching which are regarded as important indicators of quality. Enhancing student support is one of the focus areas in Phase One of the QEP project (Council on Higher Education, 2014).

Furthermore, seven out of the nine national documents analysed in this study focused on the practices related to student support and development. However, the White Paper for Post School Education and Training (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013) focused on the importance of student support only in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector and not in the University sector. A document reviewed in this study that did not focus on student support practices was the 'Framework for Qualification Standards in Higher Education' (Council on Higher Education, 2011).

In summary, expected practices in this category, include practices such as providing students with academic and non-academic support when they enter the institution, during their stay and on exit. When students enter the institution, the academic support initiatives include foundation programmes, information literacy, academic literacy and assistance with writing. During their stay, students should be supported using different means such as tutorials. It is also expected that academics take cognisance of how they interact with students.

Inactive students should be identified early, provided with support as should be students in the workplace during WIL. Students should also be assisted into adjusting into the world of work. Non-academic support such as counselling should also be provided and all support initiatives provided to students should be regularly monitored for their effectiveness.

In explaining the expected practices in detail, student support relates to academic and non-academic support provided to students by the higher education sector. Academic support relates to providing for the needs of teaching and learning (Council on Higher Education, 2004b). There should be an intensive student support system in place for students when they enter higher education, during their stay and when they exit higher education (Council on Higher Education, 2004c). There should be academic support services as well as a focus on the quality of the programmes offered at tuition centres and satellite campuses (Council on Higher Education, 2004b). Academic support services include the library, the writing centres where appropriate and technical support. On entry into higher education, the type of support given could be information literacy, academic literacy and foundation programmes. The literature (See Chapter Two) refers to this as post enrolment support, which starts once the student has been registered in an institution. The literature further refers to pre-enrolment support which is provided to students before they register.

During their stay in the institution, students could be given support through tutorials. In South Africa tutorials represent one type of academic support (Council on Higher Education, 2014). It is expected that higher education institutions ensure that academics in particular are able to support and provide counselling to learners (Council on Higher Education, 2003).

At national level, there is an expectation that staff pay attention to how they interact with students. Research published on the CHE website in a document called Enhancing the Quality of Teaching and Learning Using Student Engagement Data to Establish a Culture of Evidence noted that academics need to pay attention to staff-student interaction since students learn from academics as experts, regarding how they think and how they solve practical problems (Strydom, et al. 2012). Therefore the relationship between students and university teachers is important. This further relates to how academics carry themselves as well as their attitudes, motivation and personalities. A relationship between academics and students must be a relationship which is conducive to teaching and learning. It should not be an abrasive

relationship. At national level another expectation related to student support was evident during the MBA re-accreditations as it was a requirement that there were systems in place for identifying inactive students and providing them with timeous support (Council on Higher Education, 2003). Further expectations at national level include that students should be supported in the workplace during WIL as highlighted in the 'Work Integrated Learning Good Practice Guide' (Council on Higher Education, 2011b) and be orientated into communities of research (Council on Higher Education, 2001b). Additionally, before students exit the institution they can be supported into adapting into the world of work by means of exit orientations. In introducing various student support initiatives, it has been noted that:

> *Given the diverse characteristics of students in South African HEIs different types and levels of support are needed if students are to have a good chance of success* (Council on Higher Education, 2014, p.21).

Therefore, types and levels of student support should be different: there cannot be a simple rule. Support given to students is to be responsive to the needs of the students and the effectiveness of the various support initiatives introduced by institutions should be regularly monitored for improvement (Council on Higher Education, 2004a; 2004b).

Linking student support to enhanced quality is not exclusive to the South African context. Scotland also provides students with support, advice and guidance. This has been identified under the flexible delivery enhancement theme, the first year engagement and empowerment theme as well as on the theme called responding to student's needs. Additionally, one of the expectations in the United Kingdom's quality code in that there should be policies and practices in place for successful transition and academic progression of students (Quality Assurance Agency, 2013b). Similar those in the United Kingdom, South African students face problems of transition from the school sector to the higher education sector thus resulting in slow academic progression, hence the low throughput and graduation rates. These necessitate implementing practices related to supporting students.

3.3.8 Student evaluation of teaching and surveys to different stakeholders

In this discussion, student evaluation refers to practices related to obtaining formal and informal feedback from students during their studies regarding teaching and learning. Evaluations could include other stakeholders in evaluating teaching or the institution such as students and a parent evaluating the institution before a student registers. Surveys refer to obtaining feedback from other stakeholders such as employers evaluating the preparedness of graduates for the workplace.

The national policy documents related to quality teaching and learning in higher education indicate that student evaluation of teaching is an essential measure of quality in teaching. However, the national policy documents reviewed give minimal emphasis at national level to the use of student evaluations as a way of evaluating the modules offered in the institution and as a way of evaluating the quality in the teaching and learning taking place in various modules. The emphasis on using student evaluations to measure quality in teaching is evident during the *first and second eras*. The policy review suggests that at national level, there is not much emphasis on the use of student evaluations and surveys in the current *third era.*

In summary, the policy documents at national level refer to academics using institutional forms or academics designing their own forms in order to identify the needs of students in the classroom. It is expected that courses are regularly evaluated and the feedback obtained from student evaluations is used for improvement. There is also an expectation that surveys be conducted with different stakeholders such as employers, graduates peers, external examiners, and professional bodies. These surveys should be analysed and the findings integrated into programme reviews.

In explaining the expected practices in detail, at national level, it has been articulated that students play an integral part in ascertaining whether there is quality in teaching:

> *student opinion on courses and student or graduate opinion on programmes – gathered through student evaluations – is one of the most direct measures of teaching and learning quality* (Council on Higher Education, 2004c, p.59).

This indicates the importance of student opinion obtained through student evaluations as a quality measure. The literature reviewed in Chapter Two, revealed that students take the task of evaluating seriously and they feel competent to evaluate courses (Brockx, et al. 2012). In

South Africa, the use of student evaluations as a quality measure is currently in the hands of each individual institution. Obtaining student opinion can be through using institutional evaluation forms or through academics designing their own evaluations. The expectation regarding lecturers designing their own evaluations was stated in the 'Framework for Improving Teaching and Learning Project' (Council on Higher Education, 2001b, p. 14):

> ……*lecturers should design their own questions to ask students their opinion about their own teaching practice*

This document further states that when lecturers design their own questions, it ensures that evaluations are owned by those who are to use the results which are the academics themselves. Lecturers and courses need to be regularly evaluated (Council on Higher Education, 2003) and the results of these evaluations should be used for improvement (Council on Higher Education, 2004b). Using evaluation results for improvement was referred to *as improvement led evaluations* in a 'Framework for Improving Teaching and Learning' (Council on Higher Education, 2001b). The literature (see Chapter Two) also noted that it is not sufficient to only collect information using student evaluations. Academics need to reflect on the data and effect improvements.

In addition to using student evaluations to evaluate modules and teaching, institutions are expected to administer user-surveys in order to obtain opinions from different stakeholders (Council on Higher Education, 2001b; 2003; 2004b) for quality development and improvement. Information in a form of surveys, could be related to employer satisfaction (Council on Higher Education, 2001b), student satisfaction, graduate surveys as well as staff satisfaction surveys. This is in order to ascertain stakeholder satisfaction and to ascertain if the programme is meeting its outcomes (Council on Higher Education, 2006). Administering employer satisfaction surveys was noted as an important practice in the literature review chapter (Chapter Two). An example of the requirement regarding user surveys was also explicit during the BEd. Re-accreditations conducted nationally. The expectation was that there should be processes for monitoring and evaluating teaching and that:

> *User surveys are undertaken at regular intervals for feedback from academics involved in the programme, graduates, peers, external examiners, SACE and other professional bodies and employers, where applicable, to ascertain whether the programme is attaining its intended outcomes* (Council on Higher Education, 2006, p. 10).

Surveys should be administered to various professional bodies as well and the findings be integrated into programme reviews (Council on Higher Education, 2004b). There is also an expectation to conduct impact studies (Council on Higher Education, 2006) to ascertain the effectiveness of the programme in achieving its objectives and to help in the improvement of the programme.

The importance of student evaluations is also observed in Scotland where the use of student evaluations was highlighted in the enhancement themes, under the theme responding to student's needs theme. In the United Kingdom, there are evaluations on student transition into university (Quality Assurance Agency, 2006) and also a National Student Survey in the UK (Hammonds, et al. 2017). The importance of obtaining feedback on student needs using student evaluations has been taken a step further in some countries. In Australia, they have been the implementation of University Experience Survey and National Subject Reviews and National Course Experience Questionnaires. These are administered to institutions at a national level in order to evaluate quality offered by institutions (The Australian Higher Education System, 2014). Similarly in China, there have been national evaluations of undergraduate teaching in colleges and universities (Jiang, 2015).

3.3.9 Reviews and evaluations

This section refers to practices related to academics participating in reviews and evaluations conducted in the institution. Review and evaluation practices were stated in three out of the nine national documents reviewed.

At national level, it is expected that institutions review their programmes internally:

> *The HEQC assumes that institutional programme reviews include evidence of how the courses comprising the programme are being quality assured by the provider's internal quality management system* (Council on Higher Education, 2004c, p. 56).

The HEQC provides criteria which can be used by higher education institutions to internally review their programmes (Council on Higher Education, 2001b). Internal programme reviews can be used to judge whether or not standards have been met (Council on Higher Education, 2001b). In explaining the expected practices, it is stated that there must be clear and effective

systems put in place to evaluate programmes on a regular basis which include credible and consistent methods for reviewing programmes and modules (Council on Higher Education, 2004b). There should be reviews of teaching materials, teaching and learning methods and assessment strategies (Council on Higher Education, 2004b) by the programme coordinator (Council on Higher Education, 2004a). Teaching staff and academic managers should be provided with training and support in order to ensure consistency during the review process (Council on Higher Education, 2004b).

Review findings are to be utilised for improvement and development purposes (Council on Higher Education, 2004a; 2004c; 2004b) and to increase student access and success (Council on Higher Education, 2004b). The programme review systems are to be reviewed for impact and effectiveness (Council on Higher Education, 2004b).

3.4 Conceptions of quality as stated in the national policy documents

In this last section of the national policy review chapter, I discuss the conceptions of quality which are noted to be common in the national policy documents reviewed in this study. The conceptions evident in the policy documents are quality as: fitness for purpose, as fitness of purpose (although minimal), as value for money, as transformation and, to a minimal extent, perfection.

The conceptions of quality identified in the national policy documents matched most of the conceptions noted in the literature as discussed in Chapter Two. In addition to notions of quality as fitness for purpose, fitness of purpose, value for money and transformation, there are other notions of quality which have been adopted at national level. These notions include quality as: student success, improvement (both of these can be linked to quality as transformation), quality as development (which also links to quality as transformation), as compliance (which links to quality as perfection) and as accountability (which links to quality as fitness for purpose and quality as value for money). I now discuss the notions of quality evident in the national policy documents.

Quality as fitness for purpose and fitness of purpose

Although various notions of quality have been adopted in national documents, the common notion in the policy documents reviewed was quality as fitness for purpose. Webbstock (2008) advocates that in the South African policy documents the notion of quality as fitness for purpose refers to the social purpose of higher education which is linked to social redress thereby acknowledging the role of the higher education sector in addressing social problems facing the country. The adoption of this notion of quality as fitness for purpose in the national policy documents indicates that institutions in South Africa are expected to design their quality initiatives in line with their unique vision, mission and strategy, taking into consideration the societal issues. The notion of quality as fitness for purpose is evident in the 'Framework for Improving Teaching and Learning Project' (Council on Higher Education, 2001b) published in the *first era*. This document further proposes combining the notion of quality as fitness for purpose with quality as fitness of purpose. In the *second era*, quality as fitness for purpose is evident in the 'MBA Re-accreditation Manual' (Council on Higher Education, 2003), whereby the purpose of the qualification has to be clearly clarified. Similarly, the 'Criteria for Programme Accreditation' (Council on Higher Education, 2004a) deals with the intended purpose of the qualification. Fitness for purpose further refers to teaching, whereby the 'Improving Teaching and Learning Resources' (Council on Higher Education, 2004c) as well as the 'Criteria & Minimum Standards for BEd programme' (Council on Higher Education, 2006) documents deal with the need for academics to reflect on their teaching in order to ascertain whether their teaching is fit for purpose in a particular context. Additionally, in the *second era*, the 'Criteria for Institutional Audits' (Council on Higher Education, 2004a), focused on the fitness of purpose of the mission, vision, goals and objectives of the institution.

In the *third era*, there is less emphasis on the notions of quality as fitness for and of purpose, as compared to the *first and second era*. In the *third era*, the notion of quality as fitness for purpose is evident in the 'Framework for Qualification Standards in Higher Education' (Council on Higher Education, 2011), as it looks at the extent to which institutions design programmes which are fit for purpose and the extent to which there is a clear purpose to the qualification. The focus on quality as fitness for purpose in South Africa is similar to Australia's focus in that quality is conceptualised as fitness for purpose by the government and the quality agency (Watty, 2002).

Quality as value for money

In addition to South Africa adopting the notion of quality as fitness for purpose, in its various national policy documents, there is the conception of quality as value for money referring the extent to which students or parents receive returns on their investments**.** As discussed in Chapter Two, quality as value for money is a conception driven by corporate models and promotes the managing of higher education institutions as businesses, which includes putting the customer first. However in the first era, there was a proposal to drop this notion of quality as value for money (Council on Higher Education, 2001b) after it was proposed in the HEQC founding document (Council on Higher Education, 2001a). The reason given was lack of capacity.

It seems that the proposal to drop the notion of quality as value for money was accepted as in the *second era* quality as value for money was only adopted in the 'MBA Reaccreditation Manual' (Council on Higher Education, 2003). In this document, quality as value for money refers to market responsiveness of the programme as well as cost recovery. The market responsiveness refers to satisfying the external stakeholders.

In the *third era*, there has been concern that it has not been possible to ascertain whether value for money has been achieved (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013). There is increased emphasis on universities adopting the Consumer Protection Act (CPA) which indicates the resurrection of the conception of quality as value for money at national level. This is evident in the publication of the CPA Guidelines for Higher Education Institutions (Universities South Africa, 2015). On these guidelines, one of the quality related examples provided was:

> *If a student complains that the quality of the lecturer is not of the expected standard and the student wants a refund of fees, the quality of the lecturer would have to be analysed……(p. 19).*

This statement is an indication of adopting the notion of quality as value for money at national level and an indication of the expectation at national level that institutions should have quality lecturers. If this is not achieved students should be refunded thus linking quality to what the students has paid for.

In some of the national documents reviewed in this study, two or three notions of quality are adopted in one policy document. In others, one notion is adopted in a document. An example of a document that adopted more than one conception is the 'MBA Re-accreditation Manual' (Council on Higher Education, 2003). This document adopted notions of quality as fitness for purpose and quality as fitness of purpose as well as quality as value for money.

Quality as accountability

The national policy review further reveals that there is evidence of conceptions of quality as accountability (which is in line with quality as fitness of purpose and quality as value for money). Accountability is a means of assuring and enhancing quality, with an understanding that this can only be achieved when people are made to be accountable for their actions. In the *first and second eras*, the HEQC was trying to balance notions of quality as fitness for purpose, fitness of purpose, and also accountability and improvement (Council on Higher Education, 2001b; 2004c). In the *second era*, there was an expectation of responsibility, reporting and accountability lines (Council on Higher Education, 2004c) and of accountability frameworks to be in place in the MBA programmes in the country (Council on Higher Education, 2003). Additionally, in the *second era*, the notion of quality as accountability was identified in the 'Framework for Programme Accreditation' (Council on Higher Education, 2004, p.1):

> *Programme accreditation is a form of quality assurance which is practised in many countries and is usually associated with purposes of accountability and improvement in programme quality.*

There is also an element of quality as improvement which links to quality as transformation (see next page). Quality as accountability was present during the first cycle of institutional audits which took place during the *second era*. The 'Framework for Institutional Quality Enhancement in the second period of Quality Assurance' (Council on Higher Education, 2014) noted that:

> *There is no doubt that institutional audits contributed to strengthening the quality assurance systems and processes for individual institutions and for the accountability of the system as a whole* (p 2).

The notion of quality as accountability is further evident in the 'Criteria for Institutional Audits' (Council on Higher Education, 2004b) which focused on the extent to which the lines of responsibility and accountability are clear in the institution, as was the case with the 'Improving Teaching and Learning Resources' (Council on Higher Education, 2004c) document. Quality as accountability in the *second era* further referred to the extent to which there were periodic programme reviews for accountability (Council on Higher Education, 2006). In the *third era* while quality enhancement has been introduced, it has not lessen accountability (Council on Higher Education, 2014). This notion of quality as accountability evident in the policy documents, is also evident in the literature.

Quality as transformation

In the national policy documents, there is also a conception of quality as transformation noted across the *three eras*. In the first era, a document called the 'Framework for Improving Teaching and Learning Project' (Council on Higher Education, 2001b) deals with this notion of quality as transformation. This document states that the aim of this project was to stay within a definition of quality as transformation in an attempt to focus on transformative learning arguing that transformation means change and the extent to which the student develops cognitively. Quality as transformation is also linked to improvement and development in the *first era*, but tension between improvement and accountability (Council on Higher Education, 2001b) is noted. In the *second era*, quality as transformation is visible in the 'MBA Re-accreditation Manual' (Council on Higher Education, 2003) where reference is made to developing capabilities of students and improving curriculum. It is expected that pedagogy contributes to transformation (Council on Higher Education, 2006). Another adaptation of the notion of quality as transformation in the *second era* is noted in the 'Criteria for Institutional Audits' (Council on Higher Education, 2004b) which refers to institutions' important role of transformation in the education agenda. In the foreword of the 'Improving Teaching and Learning Resources' (Council on Higher Education, 2004c), the aim of the document is said to give effect to the transformation objectives in restructuring higher education particularly in relation to redress. This indicates a shift in the understanding of quality as transformation, from transformative education to restructuring higher education to redress the imbalances of the past. Quality assurance in South Africa has been linked to transforming the apartheid education system (Shalem et al. 2004) and increasing student access and success.

The first cycle of institutional audits, which took place in the *second era* were more assurance focused and adopted the notion of quality as transformation as they were improvement orientated (Council on Higher Education, 2004b). Institutions were judged on the extent to which they paid sufficient attention to transformational issues (Council on Higher Education, 2004b, p. 6). Institutional audits and programme accreditations in the *second era* focus on improvement. The improvement focus is noted in 'Criteria for Institutional Audits' (Council on Higher Education, 2004b) which states that "institutions should have key improvement priorities for the improvement of teaching and learning with appropriate resources, indicators and time frames" (Council on Higher Education, 2004b, p. 13). Similarly, the need for institutions to monitor, evaluate and effect improvement in teaching and learning is also noted in the 'Criteria for Programme Accreditation' (Council on Higher Education, 2004a).

This notion of quality as transformation is evident in the national policy documents in the *first* and *second eras* as indicated in the previous paragraph. Transformation objectives are to be achieved by improvements in teaching and learning (Council on Higher Education, 2004c). However McKenna and Quinn (2012) note that the notion of quality as transformation is lost in translation during the institutional audits which took place in the *second era*, particularly because the two institutions studied interpret the meaning of the word 'transformation' differently. This indicates that quality as transformation is a multidimensional concept.

The Minister of Higher Education and Training when publishing the 'White Paper for Post School Education and Training' (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013) in the *third era* has been explicit on the Higher Education transformation agenda. The external evaluation of the HEQC notes the following concern:

> *Many institutions appear to limit the understanding of transformation to demographics of staff and students, without linking the concept to teaching and learning practices which are essential for the transformation of students entering higher education* (Council on Higher Education, 2009, p. 14).

The notion of quality as transformation is evident in the various policy documents at national level possibly as a result of the introduction of quality enhancement in addition to quality assurance at this level. By introducing the quality enhancement project, it is hoped that quality enhancement and continuous improvement will be in the mind-set of the entire higher education sector (Council on Higher Education, 2014).

Quality as transformation is further viewed as being more specific to the institution, academics and students. The policy documents are advancing issues facing higher education institutions which could affect growth of society and of the economy. Quality as transformation has been linked to student success and is prominent in the *second era* where academic development was linked to student success (Council on Higher Education, 2004a) and in the *third era* in the Quality Enhancement Project (Council on Higher Education, 2014). The aim of the QEP project is to focus on the enhancement of all aspects related to teaching and learning in order to improve student success (p. ii). This document implies that student success is equated to quality. This is achieved by means of improvement in the country's graduation, success and throughput rates in the higher education system.

Quality as perfection

In the policy documents reviewed, there was also a conception of quality as compliance (which is in line with quality as perfection) but this conception was minimal in the national policy documents. The 'MBA Reaccreditation Manual' (Council on Higher Education, 2003), the 'Criteria for Programme Accreditations' (Council on Higher Education, 2004a) and the 'Criteria for Institutional Audits' (Council on Higher Education, 2004b) documents in the *second era* adopted the notion of quality as compliance. Programme accreditations aimed "to ascertain to what extent the programme did or did not comply with minimum standards specified in the criterion" (Council on Higher Education, 2004a, p. 13). Quality as compliance was further noted in the 'Report on the National Review of Academic and Professional Programmes in Education' (Council on Higher Education, 2010b). It can be noted that the programme accreditations are mainly used for ascertaining to what extent the programme meet minimum standards. There is a link between this conception of quality as compliance in the national policy documents with a conception of quality as perfection which is in line with compliance and meeting standards as documented in the literature (see Chapter Two).

In the national policy documents reviewed, the notion of quality as exceptional, as identified in the literature (see Chapter Two) was not evident. However, in the South African context across the *three eras* there were expectations that institutions should have adequate teaching and learning resources as well as human resources. These are in line with quality as exceptional.

The notions of quality in the national policy documents concerning teaching and learning, relate to both quality assurance and quality enhancement, which is an indication that the national level attempts to balance these two through various policy documents.

3.5 Conclusion

From this national policy review chapter, it is evident that there are different types of policies and policy developers have different reasons for developing policies. In this chapter, national policies are classified as public policies. The chapter further reveals that at national level, there has been an evolution in the focus on quality in higher education institutions. The evolution is currently in the *third era*, with the aim to enhance quality in teaching and improve throughput and student success. This is evident in the documents published nationally especially in the QEP project (Council on Higher Education, 2014). Therefore this policy review chapter highlights the current incorporation of quality enhancement at national level in the already existing quality assurance initiatives. The current improvement and enhancement era, elevates the focus from different aspects in the institution to, mainly, teaching and learning and, specifically, academics.

Upon reviewing these policies, it is evident that in the *first era*, there was some focus on teaching; however this was at introductory stage as the sector was still in the process of re-establishing itself under the new South Africa. As the higher education sector became more established in the *second era*, with some of the institutional mergers being finalised and some institutions in the process of merging, quality assurance initiatives were put in place at national level. Teaching and learning was one of the areas being assured together with research and community engagement. Teaching and learning then became the exclusive focus in the *third era* with the aim of understanding how the institutions enhance quality in teaching and learning in order to improve student success. This means that in these three eras there has been a focus on quality and on the policies and processes which are in place at institutional level.

This national policy review chapter also highlights the expected practices at *national level* extracted from the various policy documents related to quality in teaching in higher education institutions in South Africa. In this concluding section, I highlight the differences in the

expected practices at national level, to what has emerged in the literature. With regards to practices related to programme design, the literature advocates that when academics design a programme, it should integrate other disciplines as well (Austin & Sorcinelli, 2013). This is not articulated in the national documents reviewed in this study. The literature further highlights the importance of detailing regulations for selecting textbooks as one of the approaches to achieving quality (Zou, et al. 2012). Similarly the national documents are silent on this. On practices related to teaching strategies, the literature advocates a good structure for lectures (Pavlina, et al. 2011) which too is not explicitly articulated in the national documents reviewed. There are also practices related to student support, however the national policy documents are not explicit on the role of academics in student support particularly in the QEP project. Furthermore, the literature makes reference to special orientation sessions for students but the national policy documents are silent on this. Moreover, Steyn, et al. (2014) make reference to supporting students in purchasing textbooks, another area that the national policy documents ignore. On practices related to student enrolment, the literature identified dual enrolment as one of the quality practices but here too the national policy documents are silent.

Student evaluation practices are discussed at national level, although minimally. On the other hand, the literature cites that academics who have received negative results from student evaluations should be provided with pedagogic support (Cardoso, et al. 2015). The national policy documents reviewed are silent on the actions to be taken if an academic receives negative results. Peer evaluation of teaching is highlighted in the literature. However Harvey and Williams (2010) observe that peer evaluation of teaching raises concerns as some may find this to be an imposition in their classrooms. The national policy documents are not explicit on peer evaluation of teaching with particular reference to academics observing other academics during teaching and academics attending each other's classes and forming a council for continuous improvement as suggested by Cardoso, et al. (2015).

In addition to identifying the expected practices, various conceptions of quality emerged in the national policy documents. These conceptions are quality as fitness for and of purpose, quality as value for money, quality as accountability and quality as transformation. However it became evident that quality as transformation means different things in different documents. It became evident that at national level, the notion of quality as transformation mainly refers to social redress and staff demographics. Less attention is paid to quality as transformation where it means changing academics and their practices. Furthermore, in the

current improvement and enhancement era quality is taken to mean student success, hence the launch of the QEP Project. Therefore the national policy documents attempt to balance the notions of quality which are related to both quality and quality enhancement.

With regards to policies there are different schools of thought regarding policies in higher education. It has been argued that policy has been imported into higher education rather than developed with particular higher education characteristics in mind (Scott, 2017). Furthermore some policies act as political symbolism with no aim to actually change practice (Jansen, 2002). Policies and politics are almost inseparable (Dumakude, 2008) with some policies acting as political instruments for political agendas (van Laren & Goba, 2013). Moreover some institutions take refuge in policy formulation (Dhunpath, et al. 2016). Hence, some policies are created for scoring political points, for 'grandstanding' more than being created to guide, standardise and improve practice. Some policies are created for 'safety reasons' and as some form of protection from external evaluators. Other policies can be found along the continuum of being political or technical (Skolnik, 2010).

This chapter has reviewed the quality trajectory at national level, the expected practices engraved in the policy documents and how quality is conceptualised. It is also important to understand the quality trajectory at institutional level, the expected practices as well as how quality is conceptualised in the SAUT institutional policy documents. Chapter Four is an elaboration of the institutional context, as well as a review of the policy documents at institutional level which are related to quality in teaching in order to understand what the institution expects from academics in terms of quality.

CHAPTER FOUR: INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT: POLICIES AND EXPECTED PRACTICES REVIEWED

4.1 Introduction

Chapter Three reviews national policy documents with the aim of understanding the trajectory engaged by South Africa in an attempt to assure and enhance quality in higher education institutions after the democratic elections of 1994. The trajectory points to three eras. The three eras indicate that the higher education sector in South Africa has introduced various policies and initiatives over time, in an attempt to reshape the sector and to assure and enhance quality. Currently, at national level there is an extended focus on quality in teaching in the *third era*. Chapter Three also provides the practices expected at national level as articulated in the national policy documents reviewed, together with how quality has been conceptualised at national level.

This chapter elaborates on a particular institutional context and provides a description of the structural arrangements regarding quality in the institution. It further provides a review of the institution's policies that relate to quality in teaching, in order to understand the extent to which the institution follows or does not follow the national policies. It is important to focus on institutional policy documents because although various policies have been published at national level to assure and enhance quality as discussed in the previous chapter, institutions are responsible for their own quality. According to Mårtensoon, Roxå and Stensaker, (2014) there is increasing evidence that higher education institutions have built up internal quality assurance schemes. In the South African context in particular, institutions are responsible for putting in place quality management systems as they enjoy institutional autonomy. Institutions should be encouraged to adopt a culture of quality in all their activities taking into account national and global trends (Materu & Righetti, 2010). Although the CHE and the HEQC is mainly responsible for programme accreditations, institutional audits and recently the QEP project, it has allowed institutions to safeguard their own quality in line with the vision and mission of the institution. Institutions are responsible for clearly spelling out the practices to be implemented by academics in an attempt to assure and enhance quality.

The review of institutional policies is also to ascertain the expected quality practices to be implemented by academics at SAUT. The chapter further describes how other authors have viewed the institutional policies related to quality in various institutions. Understanding the institutional policies is important in later understanding what informs the practices reported to be implemented by academics who were participants in this study, as presented in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight. Cuban (2013, p. 115) notes that "policy makers and teachers live in separate worlds" and that turbulence, resistance, silences and absences and even chaos characterise policy making and implementation (Scott, 2017). Could this be the case at SAUT with particular reference to policy makers and academics as policy implementers?

This chapter further proposes Categories of Quality Practices in Teaching, which emerged from identifying the expected practices discussed in the literature, national and institutional policy documents. The categories set the basis for analysing the quality practices reported by academics in this study. The chapter ends with a discussion on how quality is conceptualised in the institution through its policy documents.

4.2 Elaboration on the institutional context and institutional quality initiatives

In this section, I elaborate on the contextual information provided in Chapter One by describing in depth the status quo of quality at SAUT. This is in order to explain the quality structures and systems that are in place in the institution. The elaboration of the context acknowledges the notion proposed by Rule and John (2011) of the context as background and here it refers to institutional background. According to Scott (2017) it is impossible to start with a clean sheet. The policy process in higher education is context specific.

As stated in Chapter One, the background of SAUT is that the two technikons formed one institution which was then pronounced as a University of Technology in 2006 (Du Prè, 2009). Prior to the merger and prior to the pronunciation of technikons as universities of technology, technikons in the country had external regulations and the sector was more about control of the curriculum than about quality assurance and improvement (Cooke, et al. 2010). Cooke, et al. (2010) went on to explain that in the 1970s regulation at national level involved national examiners and exam scripts being marked and moderated centrally. During the 1980s there

was another type of outside regulation: a convenor system whereby in each programme there was one technikon responsible for the quality across the different technikons offering a particular qualification. This convenor technikon was responsible for deciding on the curriculum to be taught by all technikons for that particular qualification.

The convenor system was then replaced by another type of outside regulation, which was the SERTEC in 1986 (Sattar & Cooke, 2012) as discussed in Chapter One section 1.3.2. SERTEC was responsible for quality in all the technikons across the country as well as responsible for programme accreditations in technikons. The purpose of SERTEC was to satisfy the demands of accountability and to establish whether the Technikons were doing what they were supposed to do (Selesho, 2006). In the early 2000s SERTEC was then dissolved. There was then the HEQC which is a permanent committee of the CHE at national level (See Chapter One and Chapter Three) and is currently responsible for the quality of all higher education institutions in South Africa which include universities, comprehensive universities and universities of technology. Therefore, the HEQC is the fourth outside regulator which technikons (now UoTs) have worked with.

Traditional universities had their own internal quality controls until the 1990s when there was a Quality Promotion Unit (QPU) as discussed under section 1.3.2 which was responsible for quality in universities. Similarly to SERTEC, the QPU has been disbanded and the HEQC is responsible for quality. Although there has been an introduction of the HEQC, UoTs and traditional universities now have to make their own decisions regarding what and how to teach and how they assure and enhance, quality with the HEQC leading this agenda at national level. With regard to teaching in particular, this means that for the first time UoTs in South Africa have a say in what they want to teach and how, since there exist no longer central examining and moderation of assessments, convenor systems controlling the curriculum nor SERTEC. This means that academics in Universities of Technologies have had to take on new responsibilities such as programme design which was previously in the hands of a convenor institution.

Throughout these changes it has been maintained that traditional universities, comprehensive universities and universities of technology should remain differentiated in serving the needs of the country. In line with the arrangements at national level and in line with its mandate, SAUT has developed various policies since its inception. This occurred after the merger

which took place in the *first era* (See 3.2.1). As the institution was formed by the merger of two institutions there were different policy documents in each institution. New policy documents then had to be created for the new institution. This took pace during the *second era* to the *third era*. Before discussing which institution's policy document was developed in which era, I will first describe what is stated in the policy documents regarding who is responsible for quality at SAUT.

4.3 The responsibility for quality in the institution

The Quality Unit at SAUT has put in place processes to assure and to promote quality across the institution, in the academic and the non-academic sector on all campuses. Although this is a case study (See 5.2) of one of the campuses at SAUT, the institution's 'Quality Assurance Policy' clearly states that:

> *The purpose of the policy is to ensure that across … (*name of the institution*), students have equity of access to available resources and equity of opportunity for success irrespective of programme of study or site of delivery* (South African University of Technology, 2009a, p. 2).

Therefore irrespective of the campus and the site of delivery, the Quality Unit has equal expectations with regard to access to resources, opportunities for success and quality in the institution.

The Quality Unit at SAUT falls under the university support services division. The unit has its own Director who reports to the Deputy Vice Chancellor (DVC) Institutional Support. This is different from academics reporting structure. The staff members in the Quality Unit are classified as administrative staff, although some have a background in lecturing prior to taking up positions in the Quality Unit, which is located on one of the seven SAUT campuses.

Within the Quality Unit, there are Quality Promotions Officers (QPOs) in each faculty. The QPOs are responsible for quality at faculty level. Although these QPOs fall under the Quality Unit, they report directly to the Executive Dean of the faculty on issues related to quality, and are responsible for setting up the Faculty Quality Committees (FQCs). One of the functions of the FQCs is to facilitate the preparation of internal programme reviews (See 4.5.9) and to

discuss any particular issues related to quality in the respective faculty. Each department in the faculty is represented in the FQC, as this committee consists of quality champions from each department as well as all Heads of Departments (HoDs) in the faculty. Academics report to the HoD regarding any issues related to quality in teaching. The HoD in conjunction with the departmental quality champion are thus responsible for reporting to the faculty any developments, issues and challenges related to quality in teaching during FQC meetings.

The Quality Unit, HoDs, QPOs as well as the quality champions are not the only internal stakeholders who are responsible for quality in teaching. The Executive Deans, Deputy Deans as well as individual academics also have a role to play. This is stated in the document called the 'Quality Guidelines and Procedures' (South African University of Technology, 2013a), which spells out the responsibilities of the Executive Dean, the QPO, the HoD as well as the responsibilities of individual academics regarding quality. The roles and responsibilities are to:

- *Implement and manage the AQM process*
- *Elicit feedback from students*
- *Obtain feedback from other sources such as peers, industry and alumni*
- *Contribute to the development of the self-evaluation report*
- *Ensure that all module files are up-to-date and that there is a three year ongoing archive of evidence*
- *Participate in programme review and evaluation processes*

(South African University of Technology, 2013a, p. 15)

The laying out of the responsibilities of different internal stakeholders in this document is an indication that the entire university community, including academics, is responsible for quality in the institution. This extends to programme lecturers as well as service teaching staff, who teach a specific module in a number of different programmes of study.

In addition to identifying the responsibilities of different stakeholders within the institution, the Quality Unit at SAUT has developed a framework for quality assurance. The quality assurance framework at SAUT contains the following compulsory elements:

- *Staff*
- *Staff-Student Committee*
- *Advisory board*
- *Feedback from student evaluations*
- *Feedback from surveys*

- *Cohort analysis of first year students*
- *Analysis of MI data*
- *Annual Quality Monitoring*
- *Six yearly programme reviews*

(South African University of Technology, 2013a)

These quality assurance framework elements show that there are internal stakeholders, external stakeholders and systems and processes which are important in pursuit of quality in the institution. Advisory boards are classified as external stakeholders while internal stakeholders are students and staff. Systems and processes refer to the Annual Quality Monitoring, analysis of MI data as well as reviews and evaluations.

Academic departments have full responsibility for establishing systems and processes to manage quality and safeguard academic standards at programme and at departmental level (South African University of Technology, 2013a), taking into consideration the elements of the institutional quality assurance framework. Hence, academics are important in fulfilling the institutional day to day quality agenda by implementing quality practices stated in the institutional policy documents.

4.4 The institutional policy documents reviewed

Against this background of the distribution of responsibility for quality in the institution, the elements of the quality assurance framework at SAUT, and after reviewing the national documents published at national level (Chapter Three), the policy documents published at institutional level are now reviewed. As indicated in Table 4, it is clear that the institutional policy documents were mainly published during the *second and third eras* with most of the documents being published in the *third era*. Nine documents were published in the *third era*, after the HEQC had conducted the first round of institutional audits. One document was published in the *second era* and one document 'Guidelines for Teaching and Learning' (South African University of Technology, n.d) is undated. In total eleven institutional policy documents are analysed in this study, as indicated in the last column of Table 4. Documents cited in this chapter but not included in this list are only used for reinforcing a particular point.

Era	National documents	Major developments at national level	Major developments and documents published at institutional level
First era (1994-2002)	A Framework for Improving Teaching and Learning Project (CHE, 2001b)	CHE and HEQC formed Institutional mergers introduced	Two Technikons merging
Second era (2003-2006)	MBA Re-accreditation Manual (CHE, 2003)	MBA Programme reviews	SAUT formed
	Improving Teaching and Learning Resources (CHE, 2004c)	Merging of institutions continues	
	Criteria for Programme Accreditation (CHE, 2004a)		
	Criteria for Institutional audits (CHE, 2004b)	Institutional audits	
	Criteria and Minimum Standards for B Ed Programme (CHE, 2006)		Experiential learning policy (SAUT, 2006)
Third era (2007-2015)	A Framework for Qualification Standards in Higher Education (CHE, 2011)		Induction Policy (SAUT, 2007) Assessment Policy (SAUT, 2008) Quality Assurance policy (SAUT, 2009a) Admissions policy (SAUT, 2009b) Quality Guidelines and procedure (SAUT, 2013a) Academic staff promotions policy (SAUT, 2013b) Assessment policy (SAUT, 2014) Strategic goals and objectives 2009c Strategic plan (2015 -2019) - SAUT, (2015) SAUT (n.d)
	White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (DHET, 2013)		
	Framework for Institutional Quality Enhancement in the Second Period of Quality Assurance (CHE, 2014)	QEP Project Phase One	

Table 4 Linking the national eras to developments at institutional level

4.5 Synthesis of the expected quality practices institutionally

This section is a discussion of the expected quality practices in teaching at institutional level as stated in the institutional documents. This is in order to understand what the institution expects from academics regarding quality. The discussion in this section explores to what extent the national documents inform or do not inform the institutional policies. Furthermore, the institutional policy documents are reviewed in order to later ascertain to what extent the institutional policies inform or do not inform the practices reported by academics who were participants in this study.

As indicated in Appendix B, the institutional policy documents are also reviewed using the eight categories of practices which emerged as important in the national policy documents related to quality in teaching (See Section 3.3). The reason why the categories in Chapters Three and Four are the same is that the institution seems to develop its policies in line with the national policies. To illustrate this, the institutional programme review criteria as outlined in the 'Quality Guidelines and Procedures' (South African University of Technology, 2013a) was developed using the 'Criteria for Programme Accreditation' (Council on Higher Education, 2004a). Table 5 highlights the similarities between the programme review criteria at institutional level and the programme accreditation criteria at national level.

CRITERIA FOR PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION NATIONAL LEVEL	CRITERIA FOR PROGRAMME REVIEW INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL
Programme coordination	Programme management and coordination
Programme design, teaching and learning	Programme design teaching and learning
Student assessment	Assessment
Student recruitment admission and selection	Student recruitment support and success
Delivery of post graduate programmes	Postgraduate supervision

Table 5: Similarities between criteria for programme accreditation at national level and criteria for programme review at institutional level

(Sources: Council on Higher Education, 2004a and South African University of Technology, 2013a)

These similarities are an indication that the CHE at national level, through its publication of the 'Criteria for Programme Accreditation' and through using these criteria when conducting the national programme re-accreditations, led the institution to develop policies in the image of the CHE. This is because the CHE creates frameworks and the institutions consider themselves obliged to be in line with the national policies, confirming Skolnik's (2010) assertion that quality agencies apply pressure, thus influencing institutions to shape their quality systems to be in line with the national systems.

The institution's policies reviewed in this study are mostly categorised as academic policies in the online staff portal with the exception of the Quality Assurance Policy which is categorised under quality. This policy is included for review in this study because of the focus of the study which concentrates on the relationship between academics' practices in teaching and quality. The institutional documents reviewed provide insights from the statements contained in the policies regarding what is expected from academics in relation to quality in teaching. This section outlines the expected practices noted from the institutional policy documents. The expected institutional practices (sections 4.5.1 – 4.5.10) are arranged according to how many documents refer to each practice in the institutional documents. For instance, eight institutional documents out of the eleven referred to programme design, whereas two documents referred to practices related to annual quality monitoring. A summary of which practices are discussed in which policy document is attached as Appendix B. In sections 4.5.1 to section 4.5.10, below, each category of practice is explained, followed by a discussion of its importance in the institution. A detailed explanation on how each quality practice is discussed across the various institutional policy documents is provided. Reference is made to literature particularly referring to institutional expected quality practices in teaching in different contexts.

4.5.1 Designing the programme

Similarly to the national policy documents reviewed in this study (See 3.3.1) SAUT, as an institution, advocates the importance of programme and curriculum design practices as imperative in the quality endeavours of the institution. Programme and curriculum design are the most common category of practices in eight out of the 11 documents reviewed.

Staff participation in the planning and development of programmes as well as in the design and development of new programmes and/or modules is a requirement (South African University of Technology, 2013b). The institution differentiates between subjects and modules by referring to modules as offered on a semester basis and subjects as offered on an annual basis. However, in this dissertation the term modules refer to both subjects and modules. The expectation for academics to participate in the planning, development and design of new programmes is highlighted in the 'Academic Staff Promotions Policy' (South African University of Technology, 2013b) for all ranks. Particularly at professorship level, the requirement is that there should be evidence of leadership in curriculum or program development (South African University of Technology, 2013b). Similarly to SAUT, another institution in South Africa, expects that staff participate in the development of programmes. If an academic is applying for promotion, it is expected that they should have:

> *developed at least one new module in the past three years, or evidence of participation in curriculum development teams in the school or discipline commensurate with the rank level that is being applied for; attended curriculum development workshops or seminars* (Subbaye & Vithal, 2015, p. 7).

The importance of programme design as one of the expected practices at institutional level is further evident in the staff induction policy in that the induction programme will enable staff to design a teaching programme from a course document or syllabus (South African University of Technology, 2007). Furthermore, SAUT launched a Curriculum Renewal Project taking into consideration the history of the institution:

> *The notion of 'curriculum renewal' in this project, signals an important departure from the old technikon practices associated with '(re)curriculation' and convenorship* (South African University of Technology, 2010, p. 1).

Through this project, the institution aims to depart from *old technikon* practices. The 'Curriculum Renewal Project Plan' document (South African University of Technology, 2010), did not form part of the reviewed policies. The document was read for the purposes of understanding the objectives of the Curriculum Renewal Project from the perspective of the institution. This institutional Curriculum Renewal Project provides a platform for academics to re-design programmes and the curriculum, taking into consideration the national and regional needs. The Curriculum Renewal Project is taken as a transformational project (South African University of Technology, 2015). Academic programmes are to be aligned with the

institutional and national context (South African University of Technology, 2009c) and this involves introducing new programmes or renewing existing ones. The Curriculum Renewal Project also proposes a shift of focus at institutional level, from subjects to modules (South African University of Technology, 2010).

It is expected that all new programmes must be approved internally by Senate before being submitted for approval at national level (South African University of Technology, 2009a). The 'Quality Assurance Policy' in this institution (South African University of Technology, 2009a) is aimed at demonstrating to internal and external stakeholders that the institution has robust quality procedures. For instance, this process of approval of programmes internally before seeking accreditation externally is an indication that the institution has its own internal quality arrangements related to programme design. It is expected in the institution that lecturing staff need to familiarise themselves with principles governing programme design. Changes to existing programmes must be approved at Faculty Board and ratified at Senate (South African University of Technology, 2013a). When developing new programmes, it is expected that they meet the needs of all stakeholders, including professional bodie**s** and that what they are offer is in line with the legal requirements of the statutory bodies and relevant professional bodies (South African University of Technology, n.d). Meeting the needs of the stakeholders through programme design is also an expectation at national level. At institutional level, it is expected that key stakeholders will be identified and existing relationships with them will be strengthened (South African University of Technology, 2015). One of the ways of strengthening existing relationships with external and internal stakeholders is through conducting a needs analysis. The institution expects needs analyses to be conducted with:

> • *faculty*
> • *department*
> • *students*
> • *alumni*
> • *advisory board*
> • *industry/employers*
> • *other UoT's*
> • *professional body*
>
> (South African University of Technology, 2013a, p. 65)

Conducting needs analyses with internal and external stakeholders aims to satisfy the needs of the different stakeholders (South African University of Technology, 2013a). However, the

institutional policy documents are silent on when and how this needs analysis is to be conducted. The institution is also not clear on what is to be done with the information except that stating that the information obtained from the needs analysis is to feed into the institutional Curriculum Renewal Project. Another expectation revealed by the policy review is that it is expected that all stakeholders are involved in the design of the programme and that there is coherence in the programme (South African University of Technology, 2013a). It is also expected that the programme be intellectually credible (South African University of Technology, 2013a). The expectations of coherence in the programme and intellectual credibility are also expectations in the national documents reviewed in this study (e.g. Council on Higher Education, 2003; 2014). The institution expects that there should be design and development of e-learning modules (South African University of Technology, n.d).

Another institutional expectation related to programme design and curriculum design is that there should be a responsive curriculum (South African University of Technology, 2008) and that it should be effective in promoting the achievement of learning outcomes and graduate attributes (South African University of Technology, 2013a). Programmes are to be designed to enable graduates to attain these distinctive characteristics (South African University of Technology, 2009c). Developing graduate attributes is also an expectation at national level (Council on Higher Education, 2014). Hence SAUT expects academics to design curriculum that respond to the needs of the country and to the needs of the employers producing work-ready graduates with the essential knowledge, skills and desired graduate attributes. It is also expected that there should be a set of modules on critical citizenship (South African University of Technology, n.d) and that the programmes promote the development of appropriate professional and ethical attitudes and values (South African University of Technology, 2013a).

In addition to offering a responsive curriculum, it is expected that academics integrate HIV/AIDS related issues into the curricula (South African University of Technology, n.d) in order to educate students about the HIV/AIDS pandemic facing the country. Academics at SAUT are also to design and conceptualise Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) in all programmes (South African University of Technology, n.d, p. 19; South African University of Technology 2013a), also an expectation at national level. The institution takes WIL and Service-Learning (SL) as pedagogies contributing to the attainment of desired graduate

attributes (South African University of Technology, 2013a). The WIL component is to be credit-bearing (South African University of Technology, n.d). Incorporating WIL in the curriculum is one of the ways of designing a responsive curriculum and that all academic programmes are to contain a module or set of modules designed to prepare students for the WIL component (South African University of Technology, n.d). It is the formal integration of structured real life experiences into the curriculum (South African University of Technology, 2006). However, the institutional policy documents are not explicit regarding the processes for monitoring, assessing and moderating workplace training. The introduction of WIL is in line with the national expectation that there be a balance between experiential and theoretical knowledge and that work placements should be incorporated into academic programmes.

Another aspect which is expected at institutional level is the infusion of the international dimension in all aspects of the curriculum in order to improve student mobility opportunities (South African University of Technology, 2015). The design and development of academic programmes should also take into consideration global trends (South African University of Technology, 2009c). Furthermore, the institution expects that programme design and curriculum design should allow for introductory modules assisting the student to understand fully the profession for which they have registered (South African University of Technology, 2015). These introductory modules should be carefully conceived (South African University of Technology, n.d). It is also expected that there should be research built into the undergraduate curriculum (South African University of Technology, 2015).

Similarly to the national policy documents, the institution highlights the importance of educating students for employment. Employability of the students is seen as one of the intended outcomes of quality in teaching. The institution strives to offer programmes which prepare people for the world of work (South African University of Technology, 2009c). As stated in Chapter One, the employability of the students is important in the South African context especially because many of the students enter the institution from poor families with the hope that their qualification will result in employment and exit from poverty. During the programme design process, career opportunities should be clearly identified (South African University of Technology, 2013a).

In concluding this section on programme design at institutional level, the institution expects academics to be familiar with the processes and procedures governing programme design.

Furthermore the institution expects that new programmes are approved internally at senate level before seeking accreditation from the national bodies. The institution has launched a Curriculum Renewal Project for academics to depart from technikon practices of relying on the convenor technikon to design programmes. The institution expects that academics incorporate HIV/AIDS, an international dimension, WIL and research in the undergraduate curriculum. It is expected also that there should be involvement of internal and external stakeholders when designing the programme through a needs analysis in order to produce graduates who are employable and who possess desired graduate attributes.

4.5.2 Developing professionally

Professional development practices refer to practices to be undertaken by academics themselves or ways in which the institution develops academics. Seven out of the 11 institutional policy documents highlight professional development practices.

In its pursuit for quality, the institution acknowledges the importance of the qualifications profile of academic staff (South African University of Technology, 2009c). Hence it stipulates the minimum requirements for academics as:

> *For undergraduate programmes that staff have relevant qualifications higher than the exit level of the programme (at minimum a degree). For postgraduate programmes academics have qualifications at least on the same level as the programme, and at least 50 percent of the staff have qualifications higher than the exit level of the programme (*South African University of Technology, 2013a, p. 41)

Staff qualifications are a requisite for quality in a university of technology (South African University of Technology, 2009c). In addition to staff being suitably qualified in initial employment, it is expected that existing staff continuously improve their qualifications (South African University of Technology, n.d; South African University of Technology, 2015) and engage in continuing professional development (South African University of Technology, n.d; South African University of Technology, 2015). Hence, the institution set targets for completion of Masters and Doctoral qualifications which are linked to promotion. The 'Academic Staff Promotions Policy' (South African University of Technology, 2013b) states that in order to be promoted from junior lecturer to lecturer, an academic should have obtained a Master's Degree within three years of starting teaching in the institution.

Furthermore, in order to be promoted from lecturer to senior lecturer to associate professor and to full professor an academic should have a doctorate. The national documents are silent on linking improvement of qualifications to promotion. However there is a focus at national level on the need for academics to be appropriately qualified and to obtain PhDs (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2013). At institutional level, it is also expected that assessors and moderators to have relevant qualifications (South African University of Technology, 2008) that enable them to assess and moderate. Another expectation is that staff who acquire teaching or education qualifications are to be rewarded (South African University of Technology, n.d). However, it is not explicit how and when this rewarding will take place. There is no further reference to acquisition of teaching qualifications in any other institutional policy reviewed in this study.

Also similarly to the national documents (e.g. Council on Higher Education, 2003), the institution expects that academics have a minimum two years' teaching and assessment experience as well as research and professional experience where appropriate (South African University of Technology, 2013a) and that they are competent in teaching, assessment and research. With particular reference to research, the institution encourages transformative educational research into teaching and learning (South African University of Technology, 2009c) and expects staff to "foster an attitude of scholarly inquiry (research of practice)" (South African University of Technology, 2014, p. 3). Scholarly inquiry is explained at institutional level as a tool for enhancing quality. Similarly, the national policy documents expect academics to be involved in the scholarship of teaching and learning. It is also expected that staff undertake institutional research that contributes to quality enhancement (South African University of Technology, 2015), and undertakes research on co-curriculum issues (South African University of Technology, 2015) and on teaching, learning and assessment (South African University of Technology, n.d). Hence academics need to conduct ongoing research on both content and teaching methodologies (South African University of Technology, n.d).

The institution's 'Quality Assurance Policy' (South African University of Technology, 2009a) aims to monitor support requirements of lecturers. The institution further places emphasis on placing academic staff in industry as a way of ensuring that there is a link between what is happening in the classroom and industry expectations and for academics to improve their skills and to keep abreast with developments in the field (South African

University of Technology, 2006). Industry release of academics is also in order to enhance competence and to enhance mobility opportunities (South African University of Technology, 2015). Conversely the institutional policy documents are not explicit on when and how this industry release of academics is to take place, how long academics will be released to industry and how this process is to be handled, including the criteria for selecting staff to be placed in industry.

The institution expects academic and administrative staff to be cautious about the manner in which they interact with students which is in line with the expectation at national level. To this effect, the 'Induction Policy' at (South African University of Technology, 2007) stipulates that each individual in the institution contributes to a student's education in every communication that occurs between the student and the staff member:

> *Each employee serves the process of providing education and has a role to play in the education process. Each individual contributes to a learner's education in every interaction (*South African University of Technology, 2007, p. 4).

The institution further plans to cultivate a professional attitude to students and colleagues (South African University of Technology, 2009c).

The institutional policy documents reviewed are not explicit on how the institution plans on continuously developing teaching skills and competencies of academics, except for providing an induction programme for new academics. This is different from Sweden where there has been pedagogical training for academics (Mårtensson, et al. 2014) as well as in Uganda at the Makerere University (Nobaho, Aguti & Oonyu, 2016). Other expectations at SAUT related to teaching are that staff reflect on the effectiveness of teaching and learning and that they are able to identify good practices (South African University of Technology, 2013a; South African University of Technology n.d; South African University of Technology, 2007). Reflection was also an expectation at national level, in terms of academics reflecting on their practices (Council on Higher Education, 2001b).

Similar to the expectations at national level, it is expected that new academics attend an induction programme. The aim of the induction programme is:

> *To enable staff to develop overall perspective of ……* (name of the institution) *within the Higher Education context of South Africa and to become familiar with a service-focused ……..* (name of the institution) *system, oriented to the core business*

> *of learning, teaching and assessment* (South African University of Technology, 2007, p. 2).

Therefore the aim of the induction programme at SAUT is to familiarise academics with the practices expected at national and institutional level focusing on the core business of the institution. The induction program is aimed at enabling staff to identify their role and to work with others and is particularly designed for new academic staff with no experience in teaching in higher education (South African University of Technology, n.d). The induction programme encourages staff to take responsibility for their own career development and to make plans for continuing professional development (South African University of Technology, 2007). In the literature, the introduction of induction programmes has been noted. Chitanand (2015) has summarised the aims of the induction programme as providing a safe space for academics to share and reflect on their practices, promoting reflective practice and fostering transformative learning. It has been noted that academics at another institution in the same province, are to attend an induction programme (Subbaye & Vithal, 2015). At SAUT, the induction programme ends with the submission of a reflective paper which requires participants in the programme to reflect on what they learned during the induction.

The induction policy at SAUT recognises the need for practical and personal support throughout the induction process (South African University of Technology, 2007). The policy further states that it is the responsibility of the Quality Unit to evaluate the induction programme. Evaluation of the induction programme, which is in line with what has been noted in the literature. Makunye and Pelser (2012) recommend that policy at institutional level should include taking stock of the effectiveness of the professional development initiatives in the institution and defining professional development in the context of an institution.

Another expectation at institutional level noted in the Guidelines for Teaching and Learning was that all academics should attend seminars, workshops and conferences on teaching, learning and assessment (South African University of Technology, n.d). These seminars, workshops and conferences on teaching, learning and assessment are voluntary and it is left to each individual academic to decide whether they attend these or not. It is argued that time should be set aside for professional development (South African University of Technology, n.d). Attendance of such workshops has also been noted as a requirement in another institution in South Africa (Subbaye & Vithal, 2015).

The institution aims to offer development of opportunities for middle management that is staff who are in the leadership role, as HoDs. It is stated in the 'Strategic Goals and Objectives' (South African University of Technology, 2009c) that:

> *The university will enshrine the ethos of quality teaching through sustained support for the academic and professional development of all staff. Such development will include programmes that provide outstanding leadership and development opportunities for middle management, senior and executive staff. A pivotal element will be attracting and retaining key staff through the recognition of, and reward for, excellence in teaching. The university will promote transformative educational research into teaching and learning with a view to ensuring the continuous improvement of practice.* (South African University of Technology, 2009c, p. 9).

It is also expected that academics should contribute to the development of others in their department (South African University of Technology, 2013b). However, in the policy documents reviewed, the institution is silent on how it plans to address academic workload issues and contractual arrangements, as expected at national level.

4.5.3 Teaching students

Teaching, learning and assessment are the core business of the institution (South African University of Technology, 2007). SAUT as an institution pays attention to teaching strategies and practices to be implemented by academics and pays attention to quality in teaching taking place in the institution through its various policies. Expected teaching practices are highlighted in seven of the 11 documents reviewed in this study.

For instance, Goal 3 of the 'Strategic Goals and Objectives' document (South African University of Technology, 2009c, p. 3) states that the institution aims to *provide quality teaching and learning across all disciplines, campuses and sites of delivery*. Hence there is a focus on quality with particular reference to teaching and learning. Furthermore, the importance of using different teaching practices is evident in the 'Guidelines for Teaching and Learning' (South African University of Technology, n.d) as it recognises that the different ways in which lecturers teach influences how students learn. The institution expects that there should be diverse teaching strategies in delivering academic programmes (South African University of Technology, n.d). Academics should employ different teaching

methods and approaches (SAUT, 2013b). Furthermore, academics should develop personal and professional teaching strategies (South African University of Technology, 2007) to cater for the different learning styles of the students (South African University of Technology, n.d). In another institution, it has been noted that one of the ways to enhance quality in teaching is the use of a variety of teaching methods (Subbaye & Vithal, 2015). SAUT expects that the programme team develops a coherent strategy for teaching, learning and assessment (South African University of Technology, 2013b). There should be exploration of a variety of delivery options to support and promote student success and there should be incorporation of advanced technologies into teaching delivery (South African University of Technology, 2009c).

The institution further promotes the principle of students as adult learners, taking responsibility for their own learning (South African University of Technology, 2009a). There is a central focus on the student and his or her learning (South African University of Technology, n.d), which is referred to as a student centred approach:

> *Studentcentredness as a pedagogical approach and an all-embracing institutional philosophy is a defining feature of the organisational culture of SAUT* (South African University of Technology, 2014, p.2).

To further emphasise the studentcentred approach adopted in the institution, the institution has named studentcenteredness and engagement as the two strands of the institution's DNA (South African University of Technology, 2015). However, there is a lack of definition of this studentcentred approach at institutional level, which could lead to different interpretations by academics through their practices. To deal with this notion of studentcentredness it has been proposed as one of the activities in the 'Strategic Plan' 2015-2019 (South African University of Technology, 2015), that a position paper on studentcentredness is to be developed.

The institution, expects that teaching methods and learning materials are appropriate for the level of the programme (South African University of Technology, 2013a; South African University of Technology, 2013b; South African University of Technology n.d; South African University of Technology 2015). The range of teaching and learning methods should be used effectively and efficiently to work with large groups, small groups and one to one (South African University of Technology, 2007). Academics (form junior lecturer rank to professor rank) need to use innovative approaches to teaching and learning and to have a

willingness to experiment with new technologies (South African University of Technology, 2013b). The national policy documents also refer to the expectation to use e-learning and recent developments in teaching, making it a focus at national and at institutional level. The use of e-learning is a particularly prominent expectation at a University of Technology, because all teaching and learning programmes and research projects should be related to technology (South African University of Technology, 2008-2018). Lecturers are to be familiar with various aspects of e-learning (South African University of Technology, n.d), but there is nothing explicit in the policy on how or the extent to which the introduction of e-learning contributes to improving quality in teaching. Furthermore, the policy documents are not explicit on how quality in e-learning will be ascertained and how the institution aims to deal with factors that could hinder or promote adoption of e-learning by academics. The development of the quality assurance framework for e-learning has been recently proposed as one of the activities still to be undertaken as stated in the 'Strategic Plan' (South African University of Technology, 2015). Another expectation is that academics are to participate in the development of learning and teaching materials (South African University of Technology, 2013b) which is also an expectation at national level. These learning and teaching materials could be in the form of hard copies or online but are to be accessible and effective in supporting learning (South African University of Technology, 2009c).

Academics should excel in classroom and tutorial performance in order to be promoted from associate professor to full professor (South African University of Technology, 2013b, p. 14). However, there are silences on how the effectiveness of the tutorials in improving teaching and learning is to be ascertained at both national and institutional level.

A noted similarity between the national policy documents and the institutional policy documents is that both contain an expectation that student input, participation and active learning in the teaching and learning process be promoted (South African University of Technology, 2013a; South African University of Technology, 2013b). However, a noted difference between the institutional level and national level is that there is less focus on the expected characteristics of a university teacher at institutional level, whereas the characteristics of a university teacher are receiving some focus at national level (e.g. Council on Higher Education, 2004c; 2014).

Similarly to the national expectation, and as also discussed under staff development and

support, academics should conduct ongoing research (South African University of Technology, n.d) on teaching methodologies in order to improve practice and they should be familiar with relevant literature on teaching in higher education. Hence it is expected that teaching be informed by ongoing research (South African University of Technology, n.d). In order to be promoted from Lecturer to Senior Lecturer an academic should provide evidence of engaging in the scholarship of teaching. There is also an expectation at SAUT that academics need to develop exceptional knowledge of the subject matter (South African University of Technology, 2013b) which is a requirement for associate professors and professors as per institutional 'Academic Promotions Policy' (South African University of Technology, 2013b). The review of literature (Chapter Two) also highlighted the importance of academics demonstrating knowledge of the subject matter.

In concluding this sub section on teaching practices, it is important to highlight that the 'Academic Promotions Policy' at SAUT (South African University of Technology, 2013b) recognises research more than teaching. The institution values research more as it considered to assist in improving quality in teaching. For example the score sheet, which is only used when an academic applies for Professorship is 35 points for research outputs and 25 points for teaching and supervision. This means that the institution values research more than teaching at this level. If an academic want to be promoted from Lecturer to Senior Lecturer, it is expected that he/she must be performing above average in two of the four areas of: teaching, research, external engagement and leadership, administration and management.

4.5.4 Conducting peer evaluations

Similarly to the national level, peer evaluation at institutional level, is considered to be one of the quality practices in teaching. Peer evaluation is highlighted in seven of the 11 documents. In these seven institutional documents that do focus on peer evaluation, the expectation is that academics should solicit feedback from moderators, external examiners and other external stakeholders and that there should be robust processes for internal and external moderation (South African University of Technology, 2013a). The institution expects that all assessors and moderators have a relevant qualification of at least one NQF level above the level they are assessing and have relevant experience (South African University of Technology, 2008).

The decision to appoint moderators is the responsibility of the academic department, subject to approval by the relevant faculty board (South African University of Technology, 2014).

The institution expects that peer evaluation practices are implemented by internal as well as external moderators. Internal moderation is to provide a reliability check on the marking and provide developmental feedback to staff on their assessment practices (South African University of Technology, 2008). External examining and external moderation is to be in place in the case of exit level subjects (South African University of Technology, 2014). All subjects at the exit level must be externally moderated and external moderators are to check the reliability of the marking process, the quality of student performance against outcomes as well as the quality of feedback given to students (South African University of Technology, 2008). Thus the old and the new institution's 'Assessment Policy' (South African University of Technology, 2008; South African University of Technology 2014) both state that moderation should ensure that students are assessed consistently, fairly and in an accurate manner. The purpose of moderation is:

> *To ensure that all assessors are using appropriate assessment methods at the appropriate level and are making similar consistent and academically credible judgements about students' performance* (South African University of Technology, 2014, p. 4).

Both the national and the institutional policy documents expect that moderation should ensure that assessments are fair with a representative sample of the students' work being moderated (South African University of Technology, 2008).

Another expectation regarding peer evaluation at institutional level is that WIL is to be moderated (South African University of Technology, 2006). However neither the national nor institutional policies are explicit on who is to moderate WIL, when it is to be moderated and how. The institution is also not explicit on how feedback from the moderators should be dealt with and by whom, but the national policy documents do state that it is the responsibility of the programme coordinator to monitor the implementation of improvements suggested by moderators (Council on Higher Education, 2004a).

In addition to the moderation of assessments and of WIL and the implementation of improvements suggested by moderators, the institutional policy on quality states that a comprehensive support service evaluation questionnaire is to be completed by lecturers at least once per annum (South African University of Technology, 2009a). This implies that

lecturers are regarded as important peers who can evaluate the functioning of support service departments in the institution. However, this is not an expectation at national level.

Another expectation at institutional level is that there should be peer evaluation of teaching performance (South African University of Technology, 2013b) if an academic wants to be promoted from lecturer to senior lecturer. However, there is no explicit clarification of what peer evaluation of teaching performance refers to, when it needs to be done, by whom and how. An explicit example of peer evaluation of teaching performance has been noted at the Queen Margaret University in the United Kingdom: in its policy it expects that all academics observe at least one lecture and be observed at least once per academic year and the record of these observations be sent to the Dean of School (Bamber & Anderson, 2012). In another institution in South Africa, it is expected that when an academic applies for promotion, evidence is submitted in the form of a peer evaluation report written by the line manager (Subbaye & Vithal, 2015). At SAUT, peer evaluation mainly refers to internal and external moderation of assessments, academics evaluating support services and external examination (in case of examinations of Masters and Doctorates). As per institutional policy documents, peer evaluation also refer to peers being invited as panel members during internal programme reviews (South African University of Technology, 2013a). The national policy documents also expect that there is involvement of peers during programme reviews.

4.5.5 Supporting students

The institution follows the national policy in its various documents as it promotes that students be offered different academic support initiatives. It acknowledges the importance of supporting students as one of the practices related to quality and as a means of improving student success. It is stated in the Quality Assurance Policy (South African University of Technology, 2009a) that the institution is committed to monitoring evaluating and tracking the extent to which there is effective and efficient support. Hence the institution strongly links support and quality and therefore expects that academics implement practices related to supporting students. When an academic attends an institutional induction programme at SAUT she/he is inducted on providing appropriate support to students (South African University of Technology, 2007). When an academic applies for promotion from lecturer to senior lecturer, the institution requires that he/she provides evidence of methods of providing academic support and guidance to students in order to facilitate student success (South

African University of Technology, 2013b). At professorial level, the candidate should demonstrate academic advising of students. Moreover, students across all campuses should have equivalent access to student support services and to the services of all academic support and development (South African University of Technology, n.d).

The institution also expects students to be supported and advised as prospective students who are not yet registered in the institution (South African University of Technology, 2009b). Following national policy of advising students before they register at an institution (Council on Higher Education, 2004c). In the institutional undergraduate admissions policy, it is stated that it is the responsibility of academics, administrative staff and faculty office staff to convey information to applicants upon receipt of the applications from prospective students (South African University of Technology, 2009b). The importance of conveying information to applicants was an expected practice at national (Council on Higher Education, 2006) as well as institutional level with a requirement that promotional material includes guidance and support to students (South African University of Technology, 2009).

Once the student registers as a first year student, she/he should be supported and assisted in order to adjust to the demands of a tertiary institution. Supporting first year students academically could be done through extended orientation as well as diagnostic academic testing (South African University of Technology, n.d). However, the institutional policies are not clear on what should be contained in this extended orientation. Another expectation relating to student support is that support units should provide non-academic support to students. These support services include student counselling, housing, financial aid and health services. Support units should implement strategies related to determining the learning needs of first year students (South African University of Technology, n.d). As discussed under assessment practices in the next section, academics should monitor student performance in order to identify students at risk, identify excellence and introduce appropriate timeous interventions needed to support students at risk (South African University of Technology, n.d). This was also an expectation at national level. There should be various interventions to deal with poor performance including student academic support in the form of, for example, academic literacy, numeracy, library support and student services support (South African University of Technology, 2013a). It is also expected that there should be implementation of Extended Curriculum Programmes (ECP) (South African University of Technology, n.d) which act as foundation courses for students who do not fully

meet the entrance requirements. Additionally, faculties with low pass rates should consider implementing ECP programmes (South African University of Technology, n.d). Students can be registered in the ECP programme, before being admitted in the mainstream programme. The ECP programmes are to be taught by academics employed to teach only in the ECP programme and these ECP academics have to work closely with the mainstream academics, to prepare students to enter into the mainstream qualification after having successfully completed the ECP programme.

There is also an expectation that students should be provided with tutorials to assist them with their academic work (South African University of Technology, n.d). These tutorials are in addition to normal lectures. Lecturers should engage students in lectures, tutorials, seminars and group discussions (South African University of Technology, n.d). There should also be mentoring procedures to be developed in each programme in order to enable students to recognise strengths and weaknesses in their work and to gain knowledge in the workplace during WIL (South African University of Technology, 2006). The national documents also expect that students be supported during WIL (Council on Higher Education, 2011b). However, the institution is not explicit through its policies on who is supposed to mentor the students during the academic year and during WIL. It is also not clear on what specific competencies and characteristics mentors should exhibit and how they are to be appointed. Another expectation is that there should be work-preparedness programs offered to students (South African University of Technology, 2006) before they leave the institution.

Although the institution puts forward these various student support initiatives, the methods in place to monitor them are unspecified. Monitoring of student support initiatives is a requirement however at national level (Council on Higher Education, 200a; Council on Higher Education, 2004d).

4.5.6 Assessing students

Similarly to the national policy documents reviewed in this study, at institutional level there is a focus on assessment as one of the quality practices in teaching. Assessment practices are discussed in six of the 11 institutional documents reviewed.

The institution links assessing students to quality. Goal 3 (quality teaching and learning across all disciplines, campuses and sites of delivery) and the 'Strategic Goals and Objectives' (South African University of Technology, 2009c) state that assessment at the university is essential to learning. The way students are assessed determines what and how they learn and the way in which lecturers teach influences assessment. Academics who teach a module are responsible for:

> *Designing, implementing and marking both formative and summative student assessments, for recording and analysis of results and for giving feedback to students appropriately and in a timely manner* (South African University of Technology, 2014, p. 4).

Assessment practices should be in line with the studentcentred philosophy in the institution. The latest assessment policy at SAUT, foregrounds the philosophy of studentcentredness in its preamble. The institution expects that assessment practices are in line with the student centred philosophy. As also stated under teaching strategies, this studentcentred philosophy receives more attention at institutional level than at national level. Regarding the expectations which directly link to assessment, however, the institution follows national policy in that it expects staff to ensure that assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning and that assessment practices align to the institutional assessment policy (South African University of Technology, 2013a; South African University of Technology, 2014; South African University of Technology, 2015). Furthermore, experiential learning assessment practices should be aligned with institutional policies (South African University of Technology, 2006). It is further expected that assessments should be in line with the purpose of the qualification and the learning outcomes of the module (South African University of Technology, 2014, p.3). The academic rigour and intellectual demands of assessment tasks must match both conceptual and contextual aspects of the academic programme (South African University of Technology, 2014). Also, the institution expects that the nature of the assessment tasks needs to be made explicit to students (South African University of Technology, n.d) and that:

> *Students are assessed on an ongoing basis using appropriate methods which must provide evidence that students have achieved the stated learning outcomes and met the assessment criteria* (South African University of Technology, 2008, p. 2).

Experiential training assessment criteria and procedures must be detailed in the learner guides (South African University of Technology, 2006). During academic staff induction, staff is

inducted to a range of assessment techniques to assess student work and to enable students to monitor their own progress (South African University of Technology, 2007). Academics are to provide evidence of the use of a range of assessment methods (South African University of Technology, 2013b) when applying for promotion from junior lecturer to senior lecturer. In order to be promoted to professorial level, an academic should provide evidence of effective utilisation of innovative assessment methods (South African University of Technology, 2013b). The use of e-learning platforms for purposes of assessment is regarded as a studentcentred approach.

Furthermore, assessments need to be fair, reliable, and practicable and varied (South African University of Technology, 2014). The fairness of assessments is in line with what is stated at national level. However it is not clear what is regarded as a fair assessment both at national and institutional level. The national policy documents state that assessment must be valid and reliable and the institutional policy documents state that assessment must be practicable and reliable. Therefore it is up to each academic to define these terms in a particular assessment. Academics are to make assessments explicit to students (South African University of Technology, n.d), to ensure that assessments are transparent (South African University of Technology, 2013a). They should ensure the security of tests, examination papers and examination scripts (South African University of Technology, 2013a). There should also be security arrangements in place for design, administration and publishing of assessment data (South African University of Technology, 2008), to ensure the integrity of assessments and assessment data (South African University of Technology, 2014).

Another expectation regarding assessment is that academics reflect on their assessment strategies in relation to teaching and learning as well as on the effectiveness of the feedback given to students on their performance (South African University of Technology, 2013a; South African University of Technology, 2007; South African University of Technology, 2008). The feedback given to students on their assessments needs to be timeous**,** which is also an expectation at national level. Another expectation regarding assessments at institutional level is that there should be clearly documented processes for continuous assessment (South African University of Technology, n.d) but the institutional policy documents were not clear on who is supposed to develop the processes for continuous assessment. The national documents on the other hand, were silent on the process for continuous assessment but did make reference to the incorporation of formative and summative assessments. The institution expects each programme to contextualise its assessment practices (South African University

of Technology, 2008).

At institutional level, it is expected that there should be an assessment plan which includes the schedule of assessments in that particular year or semester, the assessment criteria as well as the weighting and the timing of the assessments (South African University of Technology, 2008). It has been further stipulated in the institution's latest 'Assessment Policy' that this assessment plan must be included in the study guide and must be moderated by the moderator prior to the commencement of the module (South African University of Technology, 2014). SAUT expects assessments to be marked and marks entered on the system within ten working days (South African University of Technology, 2014; South African University of Technology, 2008; South African University of Technology, 2013a, South African University of Technology, 2014). The accurate recording of results was also stated in the national policy documents as an expected practice.

The institution, through both its old and latest assessment policies (South African University of Technology, 2008; South African University of Technology 2014) makes provision for reassessments of summative assessments. It is expected that:

> *The assessment process will afford the students the opportunity to improve their performance through reassessment where applicable and in accordance with the university rules* (South African University of Technology, 2014, p. 4).

Reassessment should apply to students who have a final mark of 45% - 49%, a student who had a valid reason to miss an assessment and where there were irregularities in assessment practices (South African University of Technology, 2008). For experiential training, there should be clearly stated requirements for re-assessment (South African University of Technology, 2006).

4.5.7 Student evaluation of teaching and surveys to different stakeholders

The institution identifies student evaluation of teaching as quality practices. This focus is highlighted in three of the 11 institutional policy documents reviewed in this study.

Quality in teaching and learning should be evaluated regularly by means of obtaining feedback from a variety of sources (South African University of Technology, 2009a)

including students. The institution promotes the effective involvement of students in monitoring and evaluation (South African University of Technology, 2013a). There should be critical evaluation of the quality of the students' learning experience (South African University of Technology, 2009a, p. 2) by means of obtaining continuous student feedback (South African University of Technology, 2015). According to the 'Quality Assurance Policy in the institution (South African University of Technology, 2009a), one of the ways of obtaining feedback from students is through the use of institutional Subject Evaluation Questionnaires (SEQs) and Lecturer Evaluation Questionnaires (LEQs). These evaluations are to be conducted manually or online at SAUT (South African University of Technology, 2013a). The institution uses the same evaluation forms for all programmes across the six faculties in the institution. These are compulsory questionnaires (South African University of Technology, 2013a).

Once these evaluations forms have been completed by students, the institution expects that the staff-student committee should review and comment on qualitative comments (South African University of Technology, 2013). There should also be an analysis of the student evaluation reports per programme (South African University of Technology, 2013a). This expectation to conduct student evaluations is also found in other institutions. For instance, in Australia, the expectation is that all subjects must be reviewed by subject co-ordinators and subject co-ordinators are to provide a report to heads of schools detailing the plans for improvement (Martens & Prosser, 1998). Another institution in the United Kingdom expects staff to conduct module evaluation on line or in a paper format, every time a module is run, by means of standard institutional forms (Bamber & Anderson, 2012).

At SAUT, subject evaluation questionnaires are to be conducted at least once per semester for semester programmes and once per annum for annual programmes (South African University of Technology, 2013a). The institution follows the national policy, as it further expects that these student evaluations be conducted early to allow for the implementation of improvements as identified by students in the evaluations (South African University of Technology, 2013a). The national policy documents do state that student evaluations should be conducted for improvement purposes but the institution goes a step further in its 'Quality Guidelines and Procedures' (South African University of Technology, 2013a) as it expects programmes to have a process in place for providing students with feedback after completing the evaluation forms:

> *It is counterproductive to ask for opinions and perceptions from students and then neither use this information nor report back to students* (South African University of Technology, 2013a, p. 52)

Students should be provided with feedback on the actions taken (South African University of Technology, 2013a). Appropriate action is to be taken in response to student feedback (South African University of Technology, 2013a). If students think their comments have been ignored they may become cynical about the process (South African University of Technology, 2013a). Another institution in South Africa, as discussed by Subbaye and Vithal (2015) expects that academics should reflect on the results obtained from student evaluations.

At SAUT, it is expected that when academics apply for promotion from junior lecturer to lecturer they provide results of the student and subject evaluations (South African University of Technology, 2013b). For promotion from Associate Professor to Full Professor, the requirement is that there are excellent student ratings from the lecturer and subject evaluation questionnaires *(*South African University of Technology, 2013b). This is an indication that the institution values students' comments and takes them seriously. The institution is committed to value the opinions of students (South African University of Technology, 2009c). However the institutional policies do not explain the consequences of negative evaluations nor they spell out intervention strategies which can be put in place by line managers and the academics themselves address the shortcomings identified by the students in the student evaluations.

The institution ensures quality of provision across the university by means of ensuring that feedback from a variety of sources is obtained (South African University of Technology, 2013a) and highlights the importance of conducting lecturer/module evaluation questionnaire and staff experience surveys (South African University of Technology, 2009a). The institution also expects feedback to be obtained from different sources by means of using surveys (South African University of Technology, 2009a, p. 4). It is the responsibility of the Quality Unit to design the surveys. The institution's 'Quality Assurance Policy' (South African University of Technology, 2009a), follows the national policy in that it states these surveys include a student experience survey and a graduate experience survey. The student experience survey is to be conducted once every three years and a graduate experience survey conducted annually (South African University of Technology, 2013a). The information obtained from these surveys and from other sources is to be triangulated and is to inform

improvement plans (South African University of Technology, 2013a).

There should be established staff-student committee that should be functional for each programme offered by an academic department (South African University of Technology, 2013a). These staff student committees are to discuss issues related to teaching and learning between academics and students. Academics need to obtain feedback from staff-student committees as well as feedback from their advisory board (South African University of Technology, 2009a). One of the roles and functions of the staff-student committee is to review and comment on the subject evaluation forms (South African University of Technology, 2013a). However the national documents are silent on obtaining feedback from staff-student committees. In the same way that it is a requirement at SAUT, obtaining feedback from student-staff committee is also a requirement in one of the institutions in the United Kingdom (Bamber & Anderson, 2012) and in Uganda (Nabaho, et al. 2016).

The institutional documents expect further that academics obtain informal feedback from student through, for example, informal discussions with students or using other questionnaires in addition to the ones developed by the Quality Unit (South African University of Technology, 2013a). The institution expects:

> *The recording of informal feedback in a feedback log. This type of feedback could be from students who speak to you in your office, or after class, etc* (South African University of Technology, 2013a, p. 46).

4.5.8 Selecting and enrolling students

Practices related to student recruitment, selection and enrolment are expressed in three of the 11 institutional documents reviewed in this study.

Although student recruitment, selection and enrolment practices are mainly administrative functions, at SAUT academics are largely responsible for these practices in conjunction with administrative staff. The participation of academic staff as well as the Student Recruitment Department is required as student recruitment is regarded as an integrated campus-wide activity (South African University of Technology, 2009b). The national policy documents

also highlight the importance of recruiting students and providing students with accurate information to assist them in making informed decisions regarding which qualification to pursue (Council on Higher Education, 2006). Similarly, to the national focus, at institutional level it is expected that there should be student recruitment initiatives which are aimed at raising awareness about the programmes offered in the institution (South African University of Technology, 2009b). These recruitment initiatives are to include advertising in various platforms such as the media, the university website, school visits, promotional material as well as annual career fairs. A marketing strategy should also be implemented (South African University of Technology, 2015). The marketing and recruitment initiatives influence the type of students attracted by the institution and thus may have an effect on teaching and learning.

To clearly articulate expected practices related to admission of students, the institution has published two admissions policies. One admissions policy relates to undergraduate and another to post graduate admissions. In this study, the 'Undergraduate Admissions Policy' was reviewed (South African University of Technology, 2009b) as the study mainly focused on quality in teaching in undergraduate programmes in line with the QEP project at national level with its focus on enhancing quality in teaching at undergraduate level. The 'Undergraduate Admissions Policy' at SAUT (South African University of Technology, 2009b), was developed in order to widen access to students who were previously not granted the opportunity to participate in higher education. This document states that:

> *The institution is committed to the national higher education transformation goals and values of equity of access and the redress of past inequalities* (South African University of Technology, 2009b, p. 2).

This is an indication that the institution follows the national policy as it aims at contributing to the transformation agenda of the country and at promoting access to higher education. The institution aims to widen access (South African University of Technology, 2013a), promote different routes for access (South African University of Technology, 2009c) and to increase student numbers (South African University of Technology, 2009c, South African University of Technology, 2015). Admission of students at SAUT is mainly based on the points scoring system derived from the National Senior Certificate (NSC) results, commonly known as matric. The selection criteria and the academic requirements of every programme should be

clear and the number of students selected should not exceed available resources and staff capacity (South African University of Technology, 2013a). The clear requirements for selection as well as the importance of not exceeding staff capacity are also expectations at national level (Council on Higher Education, 2003). The selection of students rests with academics (South African University of Technology, 2009b). The admission and registration process consist of three steps; application, selection, registration (South African University of Technology, 2009b). Academics are to pre-select students at the application stage using the information provided on the Central Applications Office (CAO) website. To perform online selections, a log-in code and a password from CAO must be obtained. There should be timeous responses to applications on the CAO website with a selection decision appropriately captured (South African University of Technology, 2009b). Information to applications is to be conveyed by academic staff, the faculty office as well as the university's admissions office (South African University of Technology, 2009b). The next step involves academics manually selecting students based on their National Senior Certificate (NSC) results when the applicant visits the institution at the beginning of each academic year. At SAUT, academics also conduct selection tests and selection interviews where applicable. If a student meets the requirements of the programme, the academic will proceed to Step One and Two out of the nine registration steps. The other steps are the responsibilities of the Student Administration Department, Finance Department, Housing Department and Protection Services Department.

Enrolment intake should be in line with the planned targets (South African University of Technology, 2015) and in line with the needs of the profession (South African University of Technology, 2013a). The admission system should be fair, simple explicit and transparent (South African University of Technology, 2009b) as is expected at national level. For example, during MBA re-accreditations, evidence of selection tests and interview transcripts was requested (Council on Higher Education, 2003).

4.5.9 Reviews and evaluations

Since at national level, institutions are mandated to internally review and evaluate their programmes (see section 3.3.9), it is not surprising to notice practices related to reviews and evaluations stated in the institutional policy documents. These practices are cited in three out of the 11 institutional documents reviewed.

The institution aims to demonstrate to internal and external stakeholders that it has robust procedures for monitoring and reviewing existing academic programmes (South African University of Technology, 2009a) and ensures that programmes can withstand external and internal scrutiny by quality assurance agencies (South African University of Technology, n.d). At national level, the policy documents are not specific on the role of academics in internal programme reviews and evaluations. However, at SAUT, academics are expected to participate in and prepare for internal programme reviews, which take place every six years (South African University of Technology, 2009a; South African University of Technology, 2013a)). Different programmes are reviewed by the Quality Unit at different times. A schedule of programmes to be internally reviewed is circulated by the Quality Unit six months before the review takes place. Programme reviews are one of the internal quality management processes implemented by SAUT's Quality Unit. As discussed in section 4.4 of this thesis, the internal programme reviews are guided by criteria which are in line with the national HEQC 'Criteria for Programme Accreditations' (Council on Higher Education, 2004a). Academics have to prepare the necessary documents as evidence of meeting a particular criterion. Another requirement is that academics contribute to the development of a self-evaluation report (South African University of Technology, 2013a) for the particular programme being reviewed. During the internal review, the information provided in the self-evaluation report is confirmed (by the review panel) against the evidence provided in files submitted by academics, as well as from the panel interviewing staff, students and other stakeholders who deal with the particular programme. The process further includes site visits, allocating time to inspect subject files and establishing of policy implementation in the programme (South African University of Technology, 2013a).

Academics are thus to ensure that the programme files as well as their module files are regularly updated and that they are maintained over a three-year cycle, (South African University of Technology, 2013a). The minimum information to be contained in these subject files is presented in the 'Quality Guidelines and Procedures' (South African University of Technology, 2013a). According to this document, a module file should include a copy of the module descriptor, of the study guide, lecture schedule, copies of all assessments (including exams), marking memos and rubrics, class list with results of all assessments, copies of moderators reports and copies of learning material given to students. Other documents to be included in a module file are AQM reports, subject and lecturer evaluations, feedback from

staff-student committee as well as evidence of changes made in response to student feedback (South African University of Technology, 2013a). Therefore there is an extended focus on how academics manage the records related to each module. During the file inspection, there is a checklist which is used for checking the above documents inside the module files as well as the inclusion of a lecture work plan (South African University of Technology, 2013a). Academics are to ensure that these documents are contained in each module file. Reviews and evaluations further include experiential learning in the programme (South African University of Technology, 2006) as well as the review of assessment practices (South African University of Technology, 2014). Once the internal programme review process has been completed, a review report is compiled by the chair of the review panel in consultation with other panel members. The review report contains recommendations for the programme (Council on Higher Education, 2013a). On receipt of this review report, academics are to draw an improvement plan based on the recommendations. The FQC is then responsible for monitoring the implementation of improvement plan (South African University of Technology, 2009a).

4.5.10 Annual Quality Monitoring

A category of expected quality practices that is not stated in the national policy documents reviewed in this study but is noted in the institutional policy documents relates to Annual Quality Monitoring (AQM). These practices are indicated in two out of the 11 institutional documents reviewed.

AQM refers to annual monitoring of activities by academic and support staff. The institution's 'Quality Assurance Policy' (South African University of Technology, 2009a, p. 3) states that "all academic and support departments are responsible for annual quality monitoring which will be implemented through departmental, sectoral and/or faculty approved processes as applicable". All departments are to implement processes for annual quality monitoring (South African University of Technology, 2013a), which is the responsibility of all full-time and part-time academic staff (South African University of Technology, 2013a). At SAUT, the aim of this AQM process is to encourage all staff to engage in reflection and critical appraisal of their scope of responsibility thus encouraging

staff to take responsibility for the quality of their provision (South African University of Technology, 2013a). The AQM process aims to help academics to identify and sustain good practices within a programme and to identify strengths and weaknesses in modules, programmes, departments, faculty and the institution. The aim is to put in place plans for improvement, to address areas of weakness, and to encourage continuous improvement (South African University of Technology, 2013a). The AQM process is further aimed at making teaching more enjoyable for the lecturer and learning more enjoyable for the students (South African University of Technology, 2013a).

In fulfilling the requirements of the AQM, individual academics are to compile annual quality monitoring reports (AQM report) for each module they have a responsibility for delivering in a given year (South African University of Technology, 2013a). These individual module reports build into programme reports, departmental reports, faculty reports and then institutional reports (South African University of Technology, 2013a). The Quality Unit at SAUT has published the formats to be followed when compiling these AQM reports. Monitoring and evaluation of academic programmes is grounded in the annual quality monitoring process which contributes to the six-yearly programme review and evaluation process (South African University of Technology, 2013a) as discussed in the previous section. An example of one of the requirements at faculty level, which must be included in the faculty AQM report, is that the different qualifications within the faculty are to report on the progress made in respect of the institution's Curriculum Renewal Project (see section 4.5.2) (South African University of Technology, 2013a). At departmental level, the department needs to report on areas related to teaching, learning and assessment. At individual lecturer level, lecturers are to report on teaching, learning, assessment, feedback from students, adequacy of resources and in student performance (South African University of Technology, 2013a).

Besides SAUT, this annual quality monitoring expectation was noted in Australia and Queen Margaret University in the United Kingdom whereby ongoing monitoring was institutionalised in response to accountability and quality assurance pressures (Martens & Prosser, 1998; Bamber, & Anderson, 2012).

4.6 Developing Categories of Quality Practices in Teaching

Following the in-depth discussions of the expected quality practices stated in the literature, the national policy documents and in the institutional policy documents, it appears that the teaching-related practices that may promote quality can be categorised. The categorisation is intended to aid analysis of the data. The expected practices are important in discussions on quality in teaching and in discussions on the role of academics in providing quality. Quality in teaching will be enhanced by excellent versions of the practice rather than just adequate implementation of the practices being merely for basic teaching and learning. Quality practices are efforts to demonstrate and evaluate quality (Blanco-Ramirez & Berger, 2014). It is the value in the daily practices (Martensoon, et al. 2014). The categories proposed in this section – Table 6 - will be used to analyse the practices referred to by academics who were participants in this study. The categories can also be used to evaluate quality in teaching in higher education institutions. The ten categories of practices are:

- Programme design
- Student enrolment
- Professional development
- Teaching students
- Assessment
- Peer evaluation
- Student support
- Student evaluation practices and surveys
- Annual quality monitoring
- Programme review and evaluation

Examples of each category are provided here and in Table 6, having been taken from literature, national policy and institutional policy. The first category is P*rogramme design practices* which comprises of practices related to planning the programme as well as planning what to teach, with the aim of meeting the needs of the different stakeholders. It includes developing desired graduate attributes to enhance employability of the students. The second category is *Student* e*nrolment practices* which include recruitment, selection and enrolment into the programme. They include providing information to prospective students, selecting students in line with the entrance requirements as well as enrolling students in line with the national and institutional enrolment targets, taking into consideration the capacity of the

programme. The third category is *Professional development practices* which relate to who is teaching in the programme, how university teachers develop themselves and how they are developed by the institution. It refers to the qualifications, experience, competences and ability to reflect on practice. Continuous improvement and characteristics needed by academics are both taken into consideration, as are development opportunities offered by the institution, including workshops on professional development.

The fourth category is *Teaching practices* which refers to how the teaching is conducted. This includes the use of various teaching strategies and methods, dealing with diverse students, incorporating technology in teaching, developing materials and participating in the scholarship of teaching and learning. Fifth is the *Assessment practices* category referring to how assessments of student learning are set, administered, returned to students within an acceptable time and the type of feedback provided to students. At institutional level, one of the expected practices includes affording students the opportunity for reassessment. Sixth is the *Peer evaluation* category which is concerned with involving academic peers in order to check the quality of the assessments, the marking and moderation of WIL. These practices further include moderation of assessments, peer evaluation of teaching as well as forming peer networks and having peers participate in programme reviews. The seventh category is *Student support practices* which relate to supporting the student academically and non-academically in an attempt to ensure that they become successful in higher education. These include providing foundation programmes, academic literacy development, tutorials and writing assistance. Eight is *Student evaluation practices & surveys* which deal with allowing higher education students, as adult learners, to evaluate the university teacher and the module being taught to them. The aim is to obtain information from students regarding the challenges they face during teaching and learning process and to put in place means of improvement. Surveys of various stakeholders such as graduates, professional bodies and employers are included in this category. The ninth category is *Annual Quality Monitoring practices* that include compiling AQM reports for each module in each year or semester, depending on the structure of the programme, using a format provided by the institution. Tenth is the *Programme review and evaluation* category which refers to institutional systems put in place to monitor quality. It includes preparing and updating files, writing self-evaluation reports in preparation for the internal programme reviews and writing and implementing improvement plans after the review.

PRACTICES	EXAMPLES
Programme design practices	Planning and designing the programme, constantly communicating with other institutions, constantly reviewing the curriculum, comparing with what other universities are offering, aligning programmes with the institutional and national context, integrating HIV/AIDS related issues into the curriculum, integrating other disciplines when developing the curriculum, including research in the undergraduate curriculum, ensuring the programme is interesting and coherent, conducting a needs analysis, putting plans to enhance employability, responding to the needs of the global and local community and to the needs of students, considering professional bodies, where applicable, interacting closely with employers, structuring work placements, preparing students for WIL, constant monitoring to ensure relevancy of the qualification, developing desired graduate attributes on students, including problem solving pedagogies, designing proper learning materials, compiling study guides, developing e-learning modules, detailing regulations for selecting textbooks.
Student enrolment practices	Proactively communicating to potential students, responding timeously to applicants, recruiting, selecting and enrolling students in line with the capacity of the programme, providing information to applicants, widening access, increasing student numbers.
Professional development practices	Upgrading qualifications, developing an overall perspective of the institution, acquiring teaching and assessment competence, acquiring teaching or educational qualifications, developing understanding of pedagogical and assessment practices, being competent to teach in English and other languages, attending seminars, workshops and conferences on teaching, learning and assessment, keeping abreast with technology, setting aside time for professional development, reflecting on teaching practices, researching teaching and co-curriculum issues, participating in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, keeping abreast with developments in the fields, demonstrating a professional attitude to students and colleagues, working in teams, contributing to the development of others in the department, developing expected characteristics
Teaching practices	Using various teaching methods, basing teaching methods on the profile of a student and on the level of the programme, aligning teaching approaches with course outcomes, delivering lectures, effectively using examples during lectures, involving students during teaching, promoting active learning, including case studies and group work, encouraging effective communication, conducting ongoing research, engaging with new technologies, incorporating technology in teaching, developing exceptional knowledge of the subject matter, teaching relevant content, accurate and up to date content, relating teaching to real life events, ensuring learning materials are accessible to students.
Assessment practices	Designing an assessment plan, designing and administering assessments, ensuring assessments are fair, valid, practicable, realistic and reliable, ensuring variety of assessments, aligning assessment with institutional assessment policy and with the purpose of the qualification, contextualising assessments, making assessments explicit to students, ensuring that assessments are transparent and challenging, ensuring security of assessments, marking assessments, using rubrics and frameworks, benchmarking, using a range of assessment methods, utilising innovative assessment methods, involving students in assessments, returning assessments to students timeously, providing feedback to students, recording assessment results timeously, analysing results, monitoring student performance, enabling students to monitor their own progress, providing opportunities for reassessment, reflecting on assessment strategies.
Peer evaluation practices	Appointing moderators, checking the quality of assessments, ensuring students are assessed fairly, ensuring all assessors are using appropriate

PRACTICES	EXAMPLES
	assessment methods, checking the marking of assessments, checking student performance, moderating a sample of the student's work, moderating WIL, peer evaluating teaching, forming a council for continuous improvement of teaching, participating in programme reviews, completing a support service evaluation questionnaire.
Student support practices	Providing wide academic support and guidance to students, providing pre-enrolment support to students, accessing the CAO website, identifying students needing support, providing extended orientation and diagnostic testing, providing tutorials, providing supplementary instruction to students, providing academic counselling to students, providing mentoring, implementing ECP programmes, enrolling students in access programmes, providing counselling to students, providing writing assistance, assisting students with the purchasing of textbooks.
Student evaluation of teaching & surveys	Obtaining feedback from a variety of sources, promoting the effective involvement of students in monitoring and evaluation, evaluating the quality of students' learning experience, conducting student evaluations once per semester or once per annum, establishing staff-student committees, analysing student evaluations, conducting surveys of different stakeholders, putting in place means of improvement based on the feedback obtained, providing students with feedback after completing evaluation forms, allocating time and space to reflect on the data collected, utilising results to make changes, obtaining informal feedback from students, recording informal feedback in a feedback log
Annual quality monitoring practices	Ongoing monitoring, compiling AQM reports for each module responsible for
Programme reviews and evaluation practices	Preparing and regularly updating files in a three year cycle, contributing to the development of SER reports, implementing improvement plans in accordance with review findings.

Table 6 Categories of Quality Practices in Teaching

4.7 Conceptions of quality in the institutional policy documents

Having examined the ten categories of quality practices, it is important to consider conceptions of quality adopted by the institution. As noted in Chapter Two, the conceptions of quality common in the literature are: quality as transformation, exceptional, value for money, perfection and quality as fitness for purpose. The review of the national policy documents (Chapter Three) reveals that there are notions of quality as fitness for purpose and of purpose, value for money and quality as transformation. There are minimal conceptions of quality as perfection and quality as exceptional at national level. Chapter Three further reveals that there is a particular focus at national level on quality as transformation to mean social redress, improving access to higher education and improving student success.

It is not surprising then that the institution adopts the national policies' notions of quality in its policy documents. The institution has mainly conceptualised quality as: fitness for purpose and of purpose, transformation, value for money and quality as perfection.

Quality as fitness for purpose and of purpose

The adoption of the notion of quality as fitness for purpose and of purpose is evident in the 'Quality Guidelines and Procedures' of the institution:

> *The institution is committed to monitoring, evaluating and tracking the extent to which it is achieving its mission and objectives within the context of national imperatives to ensure fitness for and of purpose* (South African University of Technology, 2013a, p. 2)

Fitness for purpose is further evident in the 'Induction Policy' (South African University of Technology, 2007) as well as the 'Academic Staff Promotions Policy' (South African University of Technology, 2013b):

> *It is therefore appropriate that each employee understand the context and purpose of South African Higher Education* (South African University of Technology, 2007, p. 8).

> *Provide a structure and operation that rewards scholarship (quality in teaching, strategic research, external engagement and leadership and management) and ensures continuity, relevance and fitness-for-purpose within the academic programme* (South African University of Technology, 2013b, p. 5).

Quality as value for money

The institution adopts the notion of quality as value for money as is adopted at national level. This relates to labour market responsiveness and cost recovery (South African University of Technology, 2009a). This notion is however minimal in the instituonal policy documents.

Quality as accountability

Quality as fitness for purpose can also be in line with accountability. As noted in section 3.4, accountability is in line with quality as value for money. The accountability aspect is evident in the institutional policy documents, explaining the purpose of programme reviews as:

> *To enhance accountability in the management of academic programmes* (South African University of Technology, 2013a, p. 3)

Accountability is also evident in the Quality Assurance Policy preamble in that the institution is committed to monitoring to what extent it is:

> *Ensuring accountability for the effective and efficient use of all available resources* (South African University of Technology, 2009a, p. 2*).*

Quality as transformation

The institutional policy documents further reveal a notion of quality as transformation. The institution encourages self–reflection amongst academics in order to effect improvement (South African University of Technology, n.d) and adopts the definition of quality assurance which emphasises quality as both accountability and improvement:

> *Quality assurance refers to the entire process whereby the quality of academic standards and provision is consistently evaluated and improved* (South African University of Technology, 2009a, p. 5).

This quotation deals with standards which can also be linked to quality as perfection. Additionally, the improvement aspect of quality as transformation is evident in the assessment policy which states that:

> *The assessment process will afford the students the opportunity to improve their performance through reassessment where applicable and in accordance with university rules* (South African University of Technology, 2014, p. 4).

The improvement aspect of quality as transformation is also reflected in the Quality Unit's commitment to quality promotion and improvement (South African University of Technology, 2013a). The Quality Unit:

> *will conduct thematic reviews across the university on various aspects of assessment and will make recommendations for improvement* (South African University of Technology, 2014, p. 8).

Another aspect of quality as transformation is related to equity of access and redress of past inequalities:

> *The institution is committed to the national higher education transformation goals and values of equity of access and the redress of past inequalities (*South African University of Technology, 2009b, p. 2).

The institution, in its policy documents, is not explicit about quality as transformation in relation to teaching.

Quality as perfection

The institutional policy documents reveal conceptions of quality as perfection, first to mean academic standards and second to mean compliance. The compliance aspect of quality as perfection is evident in the assessment policy of the institution:

> *All assessments should comply with and reflect the necessary alignment with the requirements of all official university documents* (South African University of Technology, 2014, p.3).

Another appearance of the notion of quality as perfection is evident in the guidelines for teaching and learning (South African University of Technology, n.d, p. 7) objective 2 as it states that the institution aims to:

> *Ensure that teaching, learning and assessment at SAUT does comply with the national legislative and policy framework governing the higher education sector in the South African context.*

Similarly to the national policy documents there was less focus on quality as exceptional at institutional level.

The institution hence attempts to balance the notion of quality assurance and quality enhancement in that there are notions of quality which have been adopted by the institution which relate to quality assurance, for example the notions of quality as fitness for purpose, value for money and quality as perfection. There are also notions of quality in the institutional policy documents which relate to quality enhancement, for example quality as transformation.

4.8 Conclusion

This institutional policy review chapter reveals that the institution developed most of its policies after th*e quality assurance era*. The policy documents reviewed were published in the *third era* which is the quality assurance, improvement and enhancement era. The institutional policies mirror mostly the expected practices in the *quality assurance era* at national level. This suggests that the institution developed its policies after a strong focus on quality assurance of the HEQC through national programme accreditations and the first cycle of institutional audits. It seems that this could have influenced the strong quality assurance focus in the policy on quality in the institution, as is the case at national level during the *quality assurance era.*

This chapter further reveals the distribution of the responsibility for quality in the institution with the Quality Unit directing processes and the different internal and external stakeholders being identified as crucial in fulfilling the quality endeavours of the institution. The internal stakeholders responsible for quality include the QPO, Dean of the faculty, HoD, teaching academics and students. Additionally, internal and external stakeholders such as advisory boards and professional bodies are identified as key elements of the Quality Assurance Framework adopted in the institution.

When juxtaposing the institutional policy to the national policy, it is evident that the institutional policy resembles the national policy, to the extent that in some cases, the words used are exactly the same. The institution prioritises programme development practices in line with the national level. In some cases the institution expects its own policies to be out of line with national expectations. There are more similarities than differences between the national and institutional policy documents. Table 7 is a summary of differences between institutional policies and the national policies with particular reference to expected practices. This comparison takes into consideration what Anderson (2003, p.5) classified as substantive, procedural, regulatory (national policies) and self-regulatory policies (institutional policies).

NATIONAL POLICY	INSTITUTIONAL POLICY
Programme Design	**Programme Design**

NATIONAL POLICY	INSTITUTIONAL POLICY
- Contextualising of the curriculum through work-site placements, service learning, community service and project work	-Integrating HIV/AIDS into the curriculum - Integrating of the international dimension into the curriculum -Participating in the Curriculum Renewal Project
Staff support and development -Silent on the link between improvement of qualifications and promotion -Silent on staff industry placement -Silent on rewarding staff with teaching qualifications -Workload issues considered as important -Development of academics as university teachers -Silent on contributing to the development of others in the department	**Staff support and development** -Upgrading of qualifications. A link between qualifications and promotion. -Participating in staff industry placements -Acquiring teaching qualifications. This is to be rewarded -Silent on how workload issues are to be addressed -Contributing to the development of others in the department
Teaching practices -Focus on the characteristics of a university teacher	**Teaching practices** -Less focus on the characteristics of a university teacher
Student evaluations -Silent on the analysis of student evaluation reports per programme -Silent on the establishment of staff student committee -Silent on the process of providing students with feedback on actions taken -Silent on obtaining informal feedback -No mention of student evaluation of modules at national level	**Student evaluations** -Analysing student evaluations reports per programme -Establishing staff student committee - Providing students with feedback on the actions taken on their comments -Obtaining informal feedback and documenting informal feedback on a feedback log - Conducting student evaluations -Using excellent student evaluation for promotion purposes
Assessment practices	**Assessment practices**

NATIONAL POLICY	INSTITUTIONAL POLICY
-Studentcentred philosophy minimal -Silent on ensuring security of assessments -Silent on making assessment tasks explicit to students -Silent on ensuring that assessments are transparent -Assessment must be fair, valid and reliable -Number of days not stipulated (reasonable time stated) for giving feedback to students -Silent on the process for continuous assessment -Silent on the assessment plan -Silent on reassessment	-Foregrounding the studentcentred philosophy -Ensuring security of assessments -Making assessment tasks explicit to students -Ensuring that assessments are transparent -Assessment must be fair, practicable and reliable -Marking and entering marks on the system within ten days - Putting in place a process for continuous assessment -Compiling an assessment plan -Providing opportunities for reassessment
Peer evaluation -Silent on the moderation of WIL - Implementation of improvements suggested by moderators should be monitored by the programme coordinator -Silent on academics evaluating the functioning of service departments	**Peer evaluation** -Moderation of WIL -Not explicit on how improvements suggested by moderators should be dealt with -Evaluation of the functioning of service departments -Peer evaluating of teaching performance expected but not clear by whom, when and how
Student support practices -Silent on providing extended orientation -Monitoring the effectiveness of the support initiatives for improvement	**Student support practices** -Providing extended orientation -Silent on the monitoring of the effectiveness of the support initiatives
Enrolment practices -Silent on who is responsible for recruiting, selecting and enrolling students	**Enrolment practices** -Academics are responsible for recruiting, selecting and enrolling students
Reviews and Evaluation practices	**Reviews and evaluation practices**

NATIONAL POLICY	INSTITUTIONAL POLICY
-No mention of academics expected to keep programme files and module files -The programme review systems to be reviewed for impact and effectiveness	-Academics expected to keep and update programme and module files -No mention of the review of programme review systems for impact and effectiveness
	Annual Quality Monitoring -Compiling AQM reports for each module academics are responsible for

Table 7: Differences between expected practices in the national and institutional documents (based on the documents reviewed in this study)

This chapter shows that the institutional policies complement the national policies to a certain degree but the institution also expects its own unique practices from academics. Some practices in the national and institutional polices are also evident in the literature review Chapter Two. However, Luckett (2010) argues that there is a weakness in the management of academics' teaching practices and academics are "allowed to do their own thing". Could this be the case with regard to quality practices at SAUT? Are academics doing their own thing or they are following institutional policy particularly since SAUT is a multi-campus institution and the Quality Unit is located in one campus? There is not sufficient in-depth knowledge about academics' quality practices in a UoT context and on the reasons why academics implement such practices. It is also important to ascertain whether there is implementation of the policies developed by the institution by academics or there is just *fascination with new policies* (Jansen, 2002).

This chapter presented the journey the institution has travelled in an attempt to provide quality, which is in line with the journey at national level. The expected practices at institutional level were also presented in this chapter. The expected practices in the literature, at national level as well as at institutional level gave rise to the Categories of Quality Practices in Teaching proposed in this chapter.

This chapter further presented the different conceptions of quality adopted in the institutional

policy documents. This institutional policy chapter reveals that the policy follows national policies in conceptualising quality as fitness for purpose, quality as value for money and quality as transformation. Conceptions of quality as perfection and quality as exceptional are minimal in the institutional policy documents, as they are in the national documents. Therefore the conceptions in the policy documents indicate the multidimensional nature of the notion of quality as was also discussed in the literature (presented as Chapter Two). In the South African national context, quality as transformation mainly refers to redressing the racial imbalances in the sector, whereas in the literature quality as transformation refers to the change and development of an individual. The institution has defined quality as transformation to mean equity of access and redress, improvement of quality of academic standards, improvement of student performance and improvement of quality through reviews. This chapter has also revealed that the South African national policies as well as the SAUT policies are not delinked from literature and the policy documents are aligned with the developments in the literature.

Chapter Five is a discussion on the methodology adopted in this study to collect data towards answering the research questions and towards obtaining a deeper understanding of this phenomenon of quality practices in teaching.

CHAPTER FIVE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

5.1 Introduction

Having reviewed the literature (Chapter Two), the national context and policies (Chapter Three) and the institutional context and policies (Chapter Four), the next step was to generate data from academics, in order to answer the research questions presented in Chapter One. A suitable methodology was needed. This chapter (Chapter Five) on the research methodology discusses how the research was conducted, the research paradigm and approach, the selection of participants, data generation methods as well as the data analysis methods adopted in this study. The Chapter further explains the position adopted by the researcher, the ethical considerations as well as trustworthiness issues. The chapter ends by discussing the limitations of the study, together with how these limitations were dealt with.

5.2 The research paradigm and approach

The three major research paradigms are positivist, interpretive and critical (Neuman, 2014). I chose an interpretivist paradigm, which framed my research purpose, approach and data generation methods in line with the world view and the assumptions of interpretivists. The interpretive paradigm acknowledges people's ideas, beliefs and perceptions which become ongoing habits, practices and procedures (Neuman, 2014). In this study, the exploration of quality practices in teaching in an interpretivist paradigm is relevant in the South African context and is suitable for exploring ideas, beliefs and practices of academics regarding quality in teaching, through answering the research questions posed in the study. Quality practices in teaching are complex in a higher education context, given the various functions of a higher education institution.

Researchers working within the interpretivist paradigm seek to understand a specific context as it is (McKenna, 2004) and to understand how people create and maintain their social situations (Burton & Bartlett, 2009). In this study, the paradigm is used to understand quality practices in teaching in higher education institutions. Interpretivism is aimed at

"understanding how members of a social group through their participation in social processes enact their particular realities" (Goldkuhl, 2012, p. 138). "The interpretative inquirer starts with a view that situations cannot be fractured into variables" (Thomas, 2011, p. 171). Human experiences and viewpoints need to be taken into account. The viewpoints of academics in this study were taken into account. In an interpretivist paradigm, the aim is to understand how people make sense of their own world, how they make meaning and how they view their own world. My interest was on exploring how academics understand their teaching world in relation to issues of quality. Hence, I focused on the viewpoints of the participants (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). In this interpretative paradigm, it is about being interested in people and the way they interrelate; what they think and how they form ideas (Thomas, 2009) to ascertain relationships between the different views and the origins of the views. In an interpretive paradigm, "the core of understanding is learning what people make of the world around them, how people interpret what they encounter, and how they assign meanings and values to events or objects" (Rubin & Rubin, 2012, p. 19).

A methodological gap was identified. I noted that the majority of the studies which have been conducted in this area have mostly adopted quantitative analysis (e.g. Kleijnen et al. 2013; Mcinnis, 2000; and Sandmaung and Khang, 2013). This suggested a need for qualitative studies in this area in line with the interpretivist paradigm. Kleijen et al. (2013) also note this methodological gap and state that further qualitative studies are needed, to ascertain academics' conceptions of quality and organisational values. If the views of academics in the area of quality in teaching are not considered, it could lead to less focus on improving quality in teaching and there could be a mismatch between policies and the practices implemented by academics. Academics' practices are central to achieving quality in teaching.

In light of this identified methodological gap, the study took the form of qualitative research, as a means of collecting and analysing the data, allowing for a detailed exploration of a topic of interest (Harwell, 2011). Creswell (2012, p. 48) echoes this in arguing that "we conduct qualitative research because we need a complex, detailed understanding of the issue". The focus of qualitative research is on understanding the meaning that the participants attach to a particular problem or issue. In qualitative research, the role of a researcher is to obtain an insight of the context being studied (Gray, 2014), which in this case is a particular campus of a University of Technology in South Africa. I used a qualitative approach in order to obtain rich in-depth data which could provide detailed descriptions and explanations in order to

answer the research questions posed in this study. Qualitative research produces data which might be overlooked when using quantitative methods (Mertova & Webster, 2009), with its focus on interpretive, material practices (Idoniboye-Obu, 2015). Qualitative research thus has the potential to reveal the practices and what informs the practices.

The advantage of qualitative research for this study is that "it gives insight into various perspectives on a phenomenon, on behaviors and feelings, and it allows a deep exploration" (Holloway & Brown, 2012, p. 15). The "merits of qualitative research are tremendous as it provides in depth data" (Harrell & Bradley, 2009, p. 115). Qualitative research has four functions:

- *Describing what exists*
- *Examining the reasons for or associations between what exists*
- *Appraising the effectiveness of what exists*
- *Aiding to the development of theories, strategies or actions.*

(Ritchie & Ormston, 2014, p. 31)

Case study research

A case study is often used by researchers in the interpretive paradigm (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). Case study research is usually a partner to an interpretive paradigm; they go together like a horse and a carriage (Thomas, 2011). A case study is one example of qualitative research designs (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). Qualitative research is closely associated with case study research and sometimes these two are used synonymously (Gray, 2014). This is a qualitative case study research as defined by Johnson and Christensen (2012) as:

> *A form of qualitative research that is focused on providing a detailed account of one or more cases (p. 395).*

This is a case study of a single campus, and its quality practices examined in great depth (Neuman, 2014). Data from academics working at SAUT campus X are used to understand the relationship between policy and practice regarding quality in teaching in higher education institutions. These academics represented the perspectives of academics on issues of quality in a UoT. This view is supported by Best (2012, p. 95) that "the purpose of the case study is

to gather a great deal of detailed information about that one single case". In a case study, the subject of the case may be a person, an event, an institution, a situation or a country (Thomas, 2011). I selected SAUT as a case study of a public higher education institution. This approach reflected my own personal interest in teaching at a UoT and because of how the institution had changed over time (sees section 1.5.2). It was important that this study was structured to provide an in-depth understanding of academics' quality practices in teaching in a UoT context, in order to shed light on the relationship between policy and practice and I wanted to shed light on how academics understand quality. I was looking for different 'leads' which could help me understand this phenomenon (Thomas, 2011) and how the practices and conceptions relate to the institutional context. Rule and John (2011, p. 134) term these as "opening up practice" and "opening up policy" when doing case study research.

This study took a form of a revelatory case study approach which has the potential to shed light on the research topic (Matthews & Ross, 2010). The research also took the form of an explanatory case study (Yin, 2012) as well as an historical case study. Rule and John (2011) note that explanatory case studies look at what happens and why it happens. They look at the factors contributing to a particular situation and what factors enable or inhibit a particular process. In this study, the factors enabling or inhibiting quality in teaching are researched. Another reason for applying an explanatory case study approach was that I wanted to explain what was happening with regards to the relationship between academics and policies about quality in the institution. Johnson and Christensen, (2012) note that research which is in the form of a case study examines the context of the case in order to explain the functioning of a case. I wanted to ask questions about what was happening in this particular case and why, in order to interpret what was found. Case studies aim to describe what it is like to be in a particular situation (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014, p. 42). In this case it was to understand what is it like to be an academic at SAUT campus X and to understand what is currently happening with regards to academics and quality. In order to describe what is happening and why, I provide an historical trajectory of quality initiatives in the national and institutional context. That is why this study has an element of being a historical case study. Rule and John, (2011) note that in the case of historical case studies, the researcher has to identify the key stages of the development of the phenomenon. This resonated particularly with the development of policy documents at national and institutional levels and how the different policies reveal the growing emphasis on quality in higher education over a number of years.

This is a case study exploring policy implementation. There are national and institutional policies in place and academics can be seen as policy implementers since they are expected to implement these policies. This policy implementation case study is aimed at understanding how the different institutional policies related to quality in teaching are being implemented (or not) by academics through their practices. It also acknowledges that academics are the policy actors in higher education with a particular reference to implementing policies related to quality in teaching. Rule and John (2011, p. 135) support the case study approach for this study, arguing that "case studies can contribute to the assessment of how policies are being implemented on the ground".

5.3 Sampling

In order to explore academics' quality practices in teaching, what informs the practices and how academics conceptualise quality, nine academics were purposively and conveniently sampled to participate in this study. Sampling in qualitative research involves purposive, theoretical, convenience and snowball sampling (Petty, Thomson & Stew, 2012). Sampling is used because it is often impossible to consult everyone when doing case study research.

In purposive sampling, participants are chosen with a purpose (Ritchie, Lewis, Elam, Tennant & Rahim, 2014) and because of their relevance to study (Petty, et al. 2012). This is echoed by Rule and John (2011, p. 64) in that in purposive sampling:

> *People selected as research participants are deliberately chosen because of their suitability in advancing the purpose of the research*

Purposive sampling is an appropriate sampling method in this study because it enabled me to deliberately choose participants based on their characteristics in order for me to be able to answer the research questions. I selected academics who were employed in different faculties in the institution and who were responsible for teaching. In purposive sampling, participants fit particular criteria (Newman, 2014).

The participants selected were invited to join the study because they taught at the campus used as a case study. None of the nine participants had programme management responsibilities. Convenience sampling was further used to select participants who were available for interviews during the data collection period (Petty, et al. 2012; Neuman, 2014), as I was working at the campus used as a case study.

As this was an explanatory case study, the depth was more important than the breadth (May, 2011; Silverman, 2013) and the aim was to have a manageable sample while at the same time obtaining reasonable data. Ngozwana (2014) notes that research in an interpretive paradigm is usually on small scale but involves studying the phenomenon in-depth. In a qualitative case study research, the researcher is not interested in representativeness of the sample but in its ability to generate data which can allow for in-depth and trustworthy accounts of the case. The richness can be gained from only a few interviews (Urquhart, 2013).

The nine academics sampled were from three faculties which were represented on this particular campus at the time of data collection. Three participants per faculty were requested to participate in this study. These participants were solicited purposefully for variation in age, number of years working in the institution, gender, race, discipline, faculty as well as the highest qualification held by that academic. Participants were selected to represent a range of academic teachers (Hemer, 2014) so that they could provide a range of perspectives (Petty, et al. 2012). Ensuring variety in a sample can be called quota sampling (Neuman, 2014). Age, number of years in the institution, gender, race, discipline, faculty and highest qualification could have an effect on the quality practices and how academics explain their practices. Furthermore these variations could have an effect on how academics conceptualise quality and how they relate to the institutional processes related to quality. On the issue of age, Ritchie, et al. (2014) maintains that it is important to ensure that all age groups are included so that the different perspectives within the age groups can be explored. The participants sampled were important in obtaining a deeper understanding of the quality practices.

The profile of the participants in this study (Table 8) shows that the nine participants were diverse. In terms of age of the participants ranged from 31 years to 62 years. With regards to the number of years working at SAUT, some had a few years (the lowest being one year) and some had worked in the institution for many years (the highest being 18 years). The participants consisted of four females and five males. Four participants were Africans, two Indians, two Whites and one Coloured. Table 8 further indicates that the participants taught in

different disciplines in the institution ranging from Languages, Information Technology, Public Relations, Human Resources Management and Accounting. At sampling stage there were three participants per faculty represented in this campus namely the Faculty of Management Sciences, Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Accounting and Informatics. During data collection, the institution embarked on a restructuring process which resulted in campus X belonging to two faculties, moving those who belonged to the Faculty of Arts on this campus to the Faculty of Management Sciences. In terms of qualifications, academics who participated in this study mainly had Masters qualifications with one academic holding a PhD and one holding an Honours degree. A profile form (Appendix C) was designed to obtain these details from the participants.

Pseudonym	Age	Number of years at SAUT	Gender	Race	Discipline	Faculty	Highest Qualification
Albert	53	18	Male	White	Languages	Management Sciences (originally Arts)	Master's degree
Brian	42	3	Male	Indian	Information Technology	Accounting and Informatics	Honours degree
Celiwe	37	8	Female	African	Public Relations	Management Sciences	Master's degree
Edith	41	3	Female	Coloured	Public Management	Management Sciences	Master's degree
Fana	37	5	Male	African	Human Resources Management	Management Sciences	PhD
Gilberto	55	3	Male	African	Languages	Management Sciences (originally Arts)	Master's degree
Haizel	62	17	Female	White	Languages	Management Sciences (originally Arts)	Master's degree
Isaac	32	1	Male	African	Accounting	Accounting and Informatics	Master's degree
Jane	31	7	Female	Indian	Accounting	Accounting and Informatics	Master's degree

Table 8: Summary of the information related to participants

The next section is a discussion on how data were generated in this study.

5.4 Data generation

Once the methodology had been decided upon, it was easier to work on the data sources (Urquhart, 2013) which were interviews and documents. In qualitative research, a variety of data may be collected to help understand the case at a deeper level (Petty, et al. 2012). Grbich (2013) maintains that the major data types in qualitative research are from interviews, observations and document collation. Qualitative data were favored to acknowledge the interpretive paradigm (Neuman, 2014). One or more methods can be used to explore and explain practices and to contribute to understanding practices (Parker, 2004). In this study, guided by the research questions, data generation was in two phases. Phase One involved conducting semi-structured interviews and phase two involved obtaining documents from academics. Rule and John (2011) explain that in case study research, data is to be collected from more than one source for triangulation purposes. The two phases of generating the data adopted in this study allowed for triangulation which involves collecting data from a number of different sources (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014; Creswell, 2014). Combining documents with in-depth interviews was in order to understand the topic better (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The next two sections discuss the two data generation methods in this study.

5.4.1 Semi-structured interviews

According to Creswell (2014, p. 185) "In qualitative research, researchers are the ones who actually gather the information. They do not tend to use or rely on questionnaires or instruments developed by other researchers*"* Hence, the use of semi-structured interviews is appropriate in this study, as it is a qualitative study. Interviews are one important data collection method (Qu & Dumay, 2011) and represent important sources in case study research (Yin, 2003). Interviews can be placed on a continuum of structured, semi-structured and unstructured (Harell & Bradley, 2009). Semi-structured interviews are popular because of their flexibility and ability to disclose often hidden features of organisational behaviour (Qu & Dumay, 2011). Semi-structured individual interviews were used in this study. During the semi-structured interviews which were face to face, academics were asked to describe the quality practices in teaching they were implementing, to describe what informs those practices and to describe how they understand quality. Academics were also asked to describe

their views and their experiences regarding the institutional process related to quality. Harrell and Bradley (2009, p. 6) define interviews as "discussions usually one-on-one between an interviewer and an individual meant to gather information on a specific set of topics".

However, a critique about interviews could be that interviewees tend to 'squeeze in' anything else that they would like to talk about during the interview. One-on-one interviews are the core data generation method in this study. It was important that I read about the art of conducting interviews before actually conducting the interviews. Mostly because "how interviewees respond to us (the interviewers) depends on who we are" (Miller & Glassner, 2011, p. 134). Taking this into consideration and taking my position as a researcher, as well as being an insider researcher, semi-structured individual interviews were conducted with nine academics. During semi structured interviews "researchers want to delve deeply into a topic and to understand thoroughly the answers provided" (Harrell & Bradley, 2009, p. 27). Thus interviews produce insights into people's experiences, opinions, values, attitudes and feelings (May, 2011, p. 131). In this study, the semi-structured in-depth interviews allowed participants to reflect on their practices. In-depth interviews are useful in examining the world from the view of the participants (Miller & Glassner, 2011). Interviews provide in-depth data which is not possible to obtain using questionnaires (Too, et al. 2015). These interviews were meant to obtain data on academics' descriptions and explanations of their quality practices. Interviews were also chosen in this study because they offer opportunities to ask for further clarifications on the spot. Harrell and Bradley (2009, p. 24) assert that interviews can be used as a "primary data gathering method to collect information from individuals about their own practices, beliefs, or opinions. They can be used to gather information on past or present behaviors or experiences".

Interviews were first piloted with two academics (one from the case institution and one from another institution) who were not participants in the study. The piloting of the interviews was conducted in order to check whether the interview questions were asking exactly what the study was attempting to understand and therefore enhanced trustworthiness. Matthews and Ross (2010) explain the importance of piloting interviews as to ensure that the data collected will be useful (before embarking on the main research). Piloting assisted in the refinement of research questions (Turner, III, 2010). After piloting the interviews, I was able to further clarify and refine the interview questions and add more probes where appropriate. I was also able to work on my interviewing skills. For instance, during the pilot interviews I noticed that I was rushing the questions and talking fast. I corrected this when conducting the main

interviews and allowed interviewees sufficient time to think about their responses.

The timing of these interviews was of utmost importance to gain access to participants as academics have extremely busy schedules. Gaining interview access is very important (Harrell & Bradley, 2009) as is negotiating access (Tietze, 2012). I sent e-mails to participants, requesting them to be available for an interview at a time they suggested. Interviews were conducted in the participants' offices as it was easy for them to continue with other tasks whilst waiting for me to come and interview them. I ensured that I was always punctual for the interview, to give participants the message that I was organised and very interested to hear their views. I also wanted the participants to feel important in this study since I took the time to walk to their offices rather than having them coming to me. During the interviews, I did emphasise continually that I was not sent by the university Quality Unit to check whether they practised quality or not. I was interviewing them in my capacity as a researcher who is a PhD student wanting to understand and analyse their quality practices in teaching.

Each interview began by assuring participants that there was no right or wrong answers. Participants could feel free to share with me the first thing that came to their minds. I ensured that I spoke less than the participants demonstrating that they had more power during the conversation. This was an important lesson learned during the piloting of the interviews, stepping back and allowing the participants to speak more. The interview started with general and lesser demanding questions (Rule and John, 2011) and moved to more specific ones. These interviews were recorded using a tablet computer and a cellular phone. Although I did take notes during the interview, these notes were very brief as I listened carefully to the participants and gave them full attention. The interviews were conducted over a period of two months.

The main interviews, post piloting, were semi-structured individual interviews which lasted 45 minutes to one hour, depending on the participants' willingness to elaborate on their quality practices. Connelly (2015) is of the view that focus group interviews should not be used when sensitive information is to be obtained. In this study I wanted to obtain sensitive information regarding the relationship between academics and quality and on the views of academics about institutional quality processes.

An instrument called an interview schedule (Rule & John, 2011) was used. The advantage of using semi-structured interviews is that "you use an interview schedule, but you are not obliged to go through the questions as they appear on the interview schedule" (Thomas, 2011, p. 163). The interview schedule used in this study (Appendix G) was a guide to what I wanted to ask the participants. This interview schedule was developed using the institutional policy on quality. There were pre-determined areas of interest (Petty, et al. 2012) which the interviews aimed to explore. The institutional policy served as a guide regarding what is expected from academics in this institution as stated in the policy documents. The schedule formed part of the ethical application at this university where this PhD is registered. It served as an interview guide which allowed flexibility, as I was able to broaden my questions more during the interview than is possible using questionnaires (Walliman, 2011). "In semi-structured interviewing, a guide is used with questions and topics that must be covered" (Harrell & Bradley, 2009, p. 27). During the interviews, I was able to probe deeper into the issues noted from the institutional policy. Furthermore, I was able to probe deeper into the issues raised by my piloted participants as well as those raised by other participants during the actual interviews. Harrell and Bradley (2009) describe probing as a way to stimulate the interview and to ask for further clarification. Probing during interviews allowed me to obtain more information regarding how academics practiced quality in teaching and how they conceptualised quality. In a semi-structured interview, the researcher can ask for further clarification and for more elaboration (May, 2011). Probing led to follow- up questions (Turner, 2010) that helped me understand in depth, the reasons and explanations provided by academics regarding their quality practices in teaching. As I wanted a deeper understanding of this phenomenon, interviews were significant to this study.

The interview questions were mainly open-ended to allow participants to freely explain their quality practices or raise any issues regarding quality in teaching in higher education. Although I had compiled questions before the interview, I allowed the interview to take the form of a conversation thus formulating new questions during the interview and omitting questions which had been answered already by the participant. In order to do this, I listened carefully to the participant's responses. Qu and Dumay (2011) acknowledge that interviews require skills such as listening skills, note taking skills, as well as careful planning and preparation from the side of the interviewer. I noted the importance of these skills during piloting and worked hard at developing them before starting with the actual interviews. With

particular reference to listening skills, qualitative researchers need to be sensitive listeners (Parker, 2004). The questions (Appendix G) were structured in such a way that I could start with broad questions and then move on to questions that were more detailed and specific (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Harrell and Bradley (2009) refer to this approach as a funnel approach of interviewing.

I was conscious of the age differences with some of the participants as some were older than myself and some younger. Table 8 indicates that the age of the participants ranged from 31 years to 62 years. However, this did not affect the approach I followed when interviewing, I had in fact been working with some of these participants for over 13 years and some for a few years therefore it was not the first time communicating with them.

All interviews were conducted in English, and then transcribed verbatim. If one is working with verbal data, the data needs to be transcribed into a written form first (Braun & Clark, 2006). This is to immense oneself in the data at an early stage (Gray, 2014). Johnson and Christensen (2012, p. 520) describe transcribing as:

> *the process of transforming qualitative research data such as audio recording of interviews into typed text. It involves sitting down, listening to the tape recording and typing what was said word for word into a word processing file.*

During transcribing I ensured that I paid attention to punctuation, correct spelling and to the structuring of the paragraphs so as not to lose meaning in the interview. In this study, after each interview, I wrote down my own reflections about how the interview proceeded and the key points of the interview. I also noted things which I needed to do differently in the next interview. This is in line with what Rapley, (2011) asserted was the strength of qualitative research in that in the process of collecting data, one can draw out key issues. Then in the next round of collection, further ascertain how relevant the issue is with a different person. The first interview was transcribed first, before conducting the next interview. This was in order to learn from the previous interview and further clarify the interview questions to avoid misunderstandings in the following interview.

Various hindrances were encountered in scheduling these interviews as some participants had different commitments and some cancelled the interview meeting at the last minute. Another challenge encountered during the interview was that some participants used it as an opportunity to talk about any issue. I therefore had to maintain some control (May, 2011)

during the interview without compromising the comfort of that particular participant who wanted to divert from the topic. These diversions allowed for later deeper interpretation of the data.

During the interviews, participants were asked to provide any document which they considered related to their quality practices in teaching or a document which according to them was an indication of their quality practices in teaching. Participants were informed that they could forward these documents to me the following day on internal mail or alternatively I could collect the documents from their offices, at a time convenient to them. The interviews ended with an appreciation of the time that the participant had sacrificed for the interview and an affirmation that they had provided valuable and interesting information. I also reminded all that I was looking forward to receiving any document/s from them which they construed to represent their quality practices in teaching.

5.4.2 Documents

Yin (2003) holds that information contained in documents is relevant in case study research. Hence, after conducting the interviews, data generation proceeded to collecting the personal quality-related documents from academics. These personal documents related to quality were therefore used as a data source on their own. These documents were obtained for the purpose of further ascertaining the practices implemented by academics and to further assist in the understanding of what informs the practices. The documents are used to strengthen and to confirm the data obtained from interviews (Rule & John 2011). "For some researchers, a document represents a reflection of reality" (May, 2011, p. 198). Obtaining these documents was also to complement the interview data. Skare (2009) states that the potential in documentation research is the possibility of obtaining different perspectives. Therefore I was open to learning more about the practices through the documents.

However it has been noted that not much has been written about using documents in research (Rule & John, 2011). The scarcity of literature on document analysis proved to be a challenge at first in deciding how best to use the documents. As with any other data source and research method there are issues of bias. McCulloch (2004) states that in order to overcome the potential problems of reliability and bias in documents, it is important for researchers to use a

wide range of documents. In this study, academics were not confined to providing any particular type of a document. They were free to provide any document they viewed as representing their quality practices in teaching. These are documents either produced in fulfilling the requirements of the institution or produced by academics on their own.

The first step is gaining access to the document (Rule & John, 2011). The process of obtaining these documents proved to be a real challenge as academics did not give me the documents easily. It became clear to me that perhaps academics were not open to sharing their quality practices in teaching or they were uncomfortable with giving me the documents. Another possible reason could have been fear from academics that I could become a whistle-blower regarding their practices (McCulloch, 2004). This resistance towards providing documents was a challenge especially because during the interviews, academics indicated that they were willing to share any quality related document with me but later became rigid in not providing the documents. Yin (2003) notes that access to the documents could be deliberately blocked. This could signal that there could be other deeper reasons for academics not providing me with their quality-related documents freely. Unfortunately, I did not collect these documents on the day of the interview. I allowed participants to send the documents to me a few days after our interview. Only one participant gave me her documents a day after the interview. I issued numerous verbal and written reminders to prompt the participants to give me any quality-related documents. To my surprise, one academic even came to my office to inform me that the HoD has instructed him not to give me anything, as everything regarding his quality practices in teaching was to be considered as private and confidential. I further persuaded the participant that he was free to give me any document which he does not regard as private and confidential. He then agreed to this. However when I came to his office the following day to collect the document, he stated that he had thought of running away when he saw that I was waiting for him outside his office door and mentioned that:

> *….but then on second thoughts, I decided let me just give you my learner guide so that I can get rid of you* (Gilberto).

After close to ten attempts to obtaining documents, eight out of the nine academics who were participants in this study, gave me the documents. A list of documents obtained is Appendix H. The next section discusses how the data obtained from interviews and documents was analysed.

5.5 Data analysis

Analysing Interviews

Yin (2012, p. 15) cautions case study researchers against an assumption that "data will somehow speak for themselves" and suggests that data need to be analysed, to make sense of the accumulated information (Vithal & Jansen, 2010). The analysis of data in this study was not computerised. The analysis of the interview transcripts was conducted manually in order to make meaning from the data and to enable me to answer the main research questions. Best (2012) explains the process of analysing transcripts as that of scrutinising the transcript to identify its central meaning. When looking for meaning, researchers look for explanations and relationships (Phillips & Pugh, 2010) between various sets of data. The challenge in analysing interview data is that accounts "may be told by participants in a chaotic iterative and non-linear manner" and it is the responsibility of a researcher to tell "the story in a coherent way" (Holloway & Brown, 2012, p. 1945), appropriating words with a view to turning them into written texts (Tietze, 2012).

Hence, to analyse data I first read through all the data from the interview transcripts. All the practices identified by participants during the interview were listed and then categorised using the Categories of Quality Practices in Teaching developed in Chapter Four. Rule and John (2011) note that coding can be based on concepts in the study. In this case the coding was based on the categories, where practices were coded into different categories (Gray, 2014). Similar practices were then grouped together, based on categories with similar features (Neuman, 2014). Moreover, each category of practices was analysed to identify the different sub-categories (Gray, 2014) of the practices. The next step involved identifying and quantifying what practices were repeatedly and commonly referred to by the academics. This was followed by an analysis to ascertain to what extent the academics were following the institutional policy by implementing institutionally expected practices and to what extent they were implementing their own practices. This was a process of forming relationships between the identified categories (Betram & Christiansen, 2014) and the institutional expectations as stated in the policy.

The next step in the analysis involved noting what the academics were saying about each practice by means of conducting a thematic analysis (Rule & John, 2011). This analysis of academics' views led to identifying various themes which emerged from the data regarding what the academics were saying about the practices and the policies in the institution. A theme can be described as "something important about the data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82) that is recurrent (King, 2012). There were also themes regarding what the academics construed as the factors having an impact on quality in teaching as well as themes regarding their reasons for implementing the practices they reported to be implementing. This allowed for identifying patterns within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006), bearing in mind that the themes derived should be "amply supported by verbatim textual example" (McAdams, 2012, p. 18). This is the method followed throughout the dissertation to present the findings (Chapters Six, Seven and Eight). In these chapters, quotations from the data are provided verbatim. Quotations are presented because quotations afford a sense of voice and are good for representing multiple perspectives (Rule & John, 2011).

The analysis of the interview transcripts further proceeded with analysis of conceptions of quality held by academics. This was done by means of segmenting, that is dividing the data into segments, to obtain the meaning of quality provided by participants (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Using conceptions of quality as evident in Chapters Two, Three and Four, the analysis proceeded into organising the conceptions articulated by academics during the interviews according to the conceptions of quality identified in the literature. Important decisions had to be made regarding what is important about the data in relation to the critical research questions.

The analysis of the interview data was not a linear process. In order to maximize the meaning shared in the interviews, the data obtained from the interviews was put through an iterative process of going back and forth (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Holloway & Brown, 2012; Grbich, 2013) when reading interview transcripts. This included listening to interview recordings a number of times in order to become familiar with the data (May, 2011; Spencer, Ritchie, O'Connor, Morell & Ormston, 2014).

Analysing documents

In the case of documents, they had to be logically assembled then numbered using the first letter of the participant who provided the document/s so that the documents further represented the voices of that particular participant. For example, Celiwe provided the AQM report which was labelled as 'document C1'. In a case whereby the participant provided more than one document, those documents were differentiated by numbers. For example, Isaac provided two documents labelled as document I1 and document I2. A list of quality-related documents provided by participants is provided as Appendix H.

Analysis of the documents began with reading each document in order to identify the practice/s evident in the document as argued by Silverman (2011, p. 95) who identifies three approaches when analysing documents:

- *The first approach focuses entirely on what is in the document*
- *The second approach focuses on how the document comes into being*
- *The third approach focuses on how the documents are used*

Document analysis in this study concentrated on the first two approaches. In line with the *first approach*, the aim was to understand what is in the document, which practice/s were evident in the document. Similarly to interview data, the practices evident from the documents were listed, then categorised using the categories developed in Chapter Four. Thereafter, similar practices were grouped together. Sub- categories were formed and finally the practices identified in the documents and interviews were combined and the common practices identified and quantified. The practices identified in interview transcripts and the practices identified in the documents were triangulated. In some cases the documents were used to verify data obtained during interviews. The *second approach* was then used to ascertain how the document was constructed and for what purpose. This was to establish if the document was self-initiated or created for the purpose of complying with institutional policy. This was to ascertain the link (or disconnection) between policy and practice and to further ascertain the reason for implementing the practices.

The next step in the analysis of documents was the identification of themes regarding policies, practices or factors recorded by academics as having an impact on quality in teaching. These were also triangulated with data from interviews. As with interview data, data from documents are described and presented on Chapters Six, Seven and Eight with

direct quotations where applicable. As in the case of interviews, analysing documents was not a linear process. It involved reviewing and re-reading the documents a number of times. This was in line with Rule and John's (2011) assertion that in case study research, documents are read several times for overall understanding, for contradiction of the data from other sources and for identifying major issues and themes. The entire analysis process was discussed with supervisors.

After the data from interviews and documents were analysed as described in this section, the next step was to interpret the data. It became evident that a relevant theoretical framework was needed to provide a deeper theoretical understanding of the nexus between the different components of the study. Theory provides guidance for policy and practice (Wright, 2007). Hence, the concepts of neo-institutional theory were later used to interpret data and to theorise the findings at a deeper level.

5.6 The researcher

"In an interpretivist paradigm, the researcher is bound up in the studied higher education setting rather than being detached from it" (Tadesse, 2014, p.138). Therefore the researcher needs to be acknowledged. This section provides details about my position as a researcher, why I am pursuing a PhD and how I selected this research area.

I am pursuing PhD studies to learn more about higher education institutions as organisations and to obtain a deeper understanding about the work of an academic. It is hoped that upcoming black female South African academics can be motivated to achieve anything in life, as it is possible if one is clear about what one wants to achieve (Mokhele, 2013). I believe anything can be achieved despite the systematic, institutional and personal impediments to growth as a black academic in South Africa. By obtaining the highest post graduate qualification, I aim to motivate students to pursue postgraduate studies. In addition I aim to be a researcher so that I can continuously conduct research and successfully supervise Masters and PhD students to completion. I am hoping that the transition from student to Graduate Assistant to Lecturer to PhD graduate, in the same institution will inspire other upcoming academics.

I became interested in studying HEIs as organisations because of my current responsibility of teaching Organisational Behaviour. I wanted a deeper understanding of the role of academics in the performance of HEIs. Furthermore I became interested in the area of quality practices in teaching, as I was in the process of reflecting on my own practices as an academic myself, teaching at a UoT in South Africa. I consider myself to be a university teacher who strives for constant development in my teaching practice. I have a personal interest in contributing towards the development of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) at institutional level, faculty level as well as department level. Reflecting on my own practices is important because when I joined academia as a Graduate Assistant (GA), I joined with a qualification in Commercial Administration. The GA programme was introduced in order to facilitate the development of young Black African academics and in order for the institution to meet equity requirements (Havenga, 2000). Having joined the university teaching profession as the 'equity person', it became important to me to be more than that. My aim went beyond contributing to the higher education sector in terms of assisting the institution to meet its equity targets. I therefore worked hard in order to be promoted from GA to lecturer. I pursued a Masters in Higher Education Studies, focusing on collaborative learning as one of the teaching and learning methods. Pursuing this Master's degree ignited a deeper interest in issues related to teaching in higher education. I identified a need to understand teaching in higher education at a deeper level and to understand how the issue of quality with particular reference to teaching, has been dealt with at different levels.

In addition to my own professional background and personal interest in the areas of teaching and quality in higher education, before taking study leave I was responsible for 'driving' quality in my department as requested by my former HoD. This role includes being responsible for any matters relating to quality with particular reference to teaching and learning at a departmental level. My choice of research topic thus reflected Phillips and Pugh's (2010, p. 145) advice that it is a good idea to choose a PhD research topic "which is related to your work". I am also a Programme Coordinator, with responsibilities including processing student appeals online at the beginning of each year. I have always been intrigued by the reasons provided by students when asked to explain on the online system why they failed a particular module. When completing their appeal forms online, students attribute their poor results to academics' teaching practices. At faculty level, before I went on study leave, I was a member of the Faculty Quality Committee (FQC). In enacting these roles, being a 'quality driver' in the department, Programme Coordinator and a member of the

FQC, I noticed that academics adopted and related to quality in different ways. I further noticed a possible tension between academics and the institution's quality processes as stated in the policy documents. These informal observations prompted me to want to obtain an in-depth understanding of this phenomenon of quality and the role of academics in quality matters with particular reference to their practices and how they embrace policies related to quality. My experience hence reflects Rule and John's (2011) notion that research could be ignited by a particular problem experienced in practice.

In my personal life, I am married to someone who is passionate about soccer, particularly the Orlando Pirates soccer team. I have always been fascinated by how much attention is paid (by my husband and the media) to how the performance of any soccer team is linked to the coach. Furthermore, on most media platforms, soccer coaches admit that they are fully responsible for the performance of the soccer team. It has fascinated me to see how different this is to the higher education context whereby attention is usually put on students when it comes to performance. Students are normally seen as the ones who are fully responsible for their success. However, different stakeholders have an important role to play in the success of a student which can be an indication of quality.

I envisaged the possible self-benefits of embarking on this PhD journey as an opportunity to learn and grow as a university teacher and as a researcher. Exploring the phenomenon of academics' quality practices allowed me to contribute to obtaining a deeper understanding of the relationship between policy, practices and conceptions based on evidence, rather than speculating about the possible reasons. Another envisaged possible self-benefit of embarking on a PhD is to be promoted later to leadership positions in the institution, as I am currently in a position of Programme Coordinator. This idea is supported by Manathunga, et al. (2009, p. 91) who note that a doctoral degree seeks to:

> *Transform students into independent researchers, capable of adapting to a range of employment destinations and taking up leadership positions in academia, industry and the professions*

Being an insider researcher

I took on the identity of an insider researcher as I was researching my own workplace. It was important that I put myself "in the shoes of the participants in order to obtain an understanding of their world" (Holloway & Brown, 2012, p. 1929), without pre-judging the participants and making assumptions about my participants. However, I acknowledge both the benefits and drawbacks of being an insider researcher.

Having worked as a lecturer in the institution for more than 18 years, from Graduate Assistant to Lecturer and having developed a close relationship with other academics in this campus where the study was conducted, my situation came with its own benefits and challenges. There was a needed drift (Tietze, 2012) between being a researcher and an employee. One of the benefits of being an inside researcher was that I was knowledgeable about the institution and deeply connected to the work of an academic in this institution. This 'insider knowledge' (Blaxter, Hughes & Tight, 2006) assisted in clarifying the research problem. Another advantage of being an insider researcher was a deep understanding of issues requiring attention (Gray, 2014) from an insider perspective. Being both an academic and a researcher, allowed me to be in direct contact with the research field and allowed me to provide recommendations from the viewpoint of an insider (Arar, 2016). It was also an advantage to someone researching from outside as an insider, I had easy access to information (Arar, 2016) and had easy access to the case (Rule & John, 2011). Parker (2004) argues that the main challenge for student researchers is getting access to a research site. In my case for example, I knew the process involved in obtaining gatekeeper's permission (Appendix E), whereas it would have taken me longer to do so at another institution. Additionally, working on the same campus where I did my research was an advantage as it might have taken me longer to research another campus if I had to travel to that campus and had to work on the rapport with participants. I easily built rapport with the participants in this study and I was able to conduct research during work time without having to travel.

Despite the benefits aforementioned, being an insider researcher and researching my own institution also came with challenges. For instance, scheduling interviews proved to be difficult as some of my colleagues cancelled interview appointments at the last second for reasons such as "*Sorry had to go and do my nails – don't you think they look pretty*?" This could be because I was interrupting their lives (Tietze, 2012). I was able to overcome this

challenge by being patient with participants and allowing them to suggest a time that was suitable for them. Researching my own institution as an organisation, was also a challenge in that at times I had my "own baggage" having worked in the institution for many years. The danger of this could be that findings could be distorted or restricted by researcher bias (Rule & John, 2011; Creswell, 2014). To overcome this possibility, I continuously had to go back to the interview scripts and documents to confirm that I had understood the data correctly and to confirm that I had presented exactly what the academics had told me, rather than what I thought they had told me. My supervisors proved to be of great assistance in this regard by helping me to minimise my biases and to keep an open mind throughout the study. My supervisors also guided me to recognise significant information in the data which I might have overlooked as it seemed obvious to me (Blaxter, et al. 2006). Another technique of dealing with this challenge of being an insider researcher and of bias was to ensure that I had no leading questions in my interview guide, which might have influenced the participants to answer in a particular manner. I also kept an open mind regarding the outcomes of the research.

However, Milligan (2016) cautions that we are neither fully inside nor outside as people hold multiple identities. For instance, as a researcher I was not only an academic in the institution but I was a young, married black woman who holds a Master's degree and is an English second language speaker. These might have made me an outsider to someone who is of a different age, marital status, race group, has a different qualification, and is English first language speaking.

5.7 Ethical considerations

Gray (2014) explains research ethics as the set of moral principles and norms used to guide the research. Ethical principles were observed in this study in the following ways: First, an ethical consideration was obtaining access to the research site. I obtained a gatekeeper's letter (Appendix E) from the research office of this institution that was used as the case study. The letter is evidence that there is permit for the research to be done (Creswell, 2014). Additionally, I obtained an ethical clearance letter from the University of KwaZulu-Natal where this PhD study was registered (Appendix F).

In terms of ethical considerations with regards to participants, each was approached individually and requested to participate voluntarily in the study, thus upholding Neuman's (2014, p. 75) contention that: *"*A fundamental ethical principle in social research is never coerce anyone into participating; participation must be voluntary at all times*"*.

Voluntary participation enabled me to attract participants who were willing to be interviewed. The profile and consent forms (Appendices C and D) were given to participants to read, complete and sign before the interview. Signing the consent form was an agreement to participate (Newman, 2014). Interviewees need to give informed consent to the researchers (Qu & Dumay, 2011) and this is a key principle in social research (Webster, Lewis & Brown, 2014). Consent means the participants agree to take part in the study (Betram & Christiansen, 2014). Informed consent was therefore obtained from the participants. Participants were asked to sign a letter of consent as an indication that they willingly participated (Urquhart, 2013) in the study and that they had been informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time (Urquhart, 2013). This is referred to by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2009) as the freedom to withdraw without any consequence. Informed consent in this study was obtained after clarifying to the participants the following points:

- *The nature and purpose of the study, including its methods*
- *Expected benefits of the study*
- *Information about confidentiality and anonymity*
- *Ethics procedures being followed* (Thomas, 2011, p. 69)

In addition to obtaining formal consent prior to the interview, I explained to the participants the intention of the interview before beginning each interview. Furthermore, I assured participants that their names would be kept confidential with pseudonyms used instead of real names to conceal their identity (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Not revealing the names of the participants' accords with Qu and Dumay (2011) who assert that confidentiality is important especially if participants are talking about their work life. In this study, both the institution and the participants' identities are hidden. Sometimes, it is important to anonymise the organisation and the participants (Urquhart, 2013). I informed participants that the information would not be reported in such a way that the person who contributed could be identified easily. Participants were informed that when reporting the data, features which could make the participant easily identifiable would not be included. The participants were

also assured that the information obtained from them would only be used for the purposes of this research.

The process of conducting and transcribing the interviews myself, ensured confidentiality of the data obtained as I was the only person with access to the statements made by the participants. The study prompted academics who were participants in this study, to reflect on their quality practices. Thus it may have benefited others.

5.8 Trustworthiness

As this was a qualitative study, issues of trustworthiness and rigor of the study had to be considered, to ensure that the findings of the study can be trusted. One of the ways of ensuring trustworthiness of the data received was by comparing and confirming the interview data with other data sources such as documents. This was to obtain a deeper understanding of the practices which were the focus of this research. The use of different data collection methods within one study enabled triangulation (Holloway & Brown, 2012) which also helps ensure trustworthiness of the data. Using both interviews and documents provided by academics allowed for confirmation of the practices. During the interviews I ensured that I remained neutral through the interview without judging or leading the participants. I also worked hard to avoid researcher bias in this study.

After the interviews were transcribed, participants were e-mailed the interview transcripts to obtain their views on whether or not I had transcribed their sentiments accurately. Asking my participants to provide me with feedback on my interview transcripts also helped me to minimise researcher bias (Johnson & Christensen, 2012), where the researcher finds what they want to find in the data collected. Allowing participants to check the transcripts is referred to by Lincoln and Guba (2007) as a member check process, where participants are given the opportunity to check the interview transcripts for truthfulness. This was to further verify the credibility (Houghton, Casey, Shaw & Murphy, 2013; Lia & Hitchcock, 2018; Smith & McGannon, 2018) of the transcripts and to ascertain to what extent the findings ring true according to participants (Petty, et al. 2012).

The thick description of the context of the research and use of direct quotations to present the data also enhanced its trustworthiness and transferability of the findings. Another method to ensure the data trustworthiness were through an audit trail, which Holloway and Brown (2012) describe as the description of the research decisions made by a researcher throughout the study. The prolonged writing process of the dissertation ensured that ideas were refined and coherence ensured throughout the dissertation.

Trustworthiness of the data was also enhanced by conducting the interviews in the offices of the participants therefore obtaining the data in their natural setting where academics were comfortable to communicate. I also ensured trustworthiness of the data by guaranteeing that all the interviews were conducted, recorded and transcribed by myself to ensure the views of the participants were accurately recorded. This promoted legitimacy and accuracy of the information obtained.

5.9 Limitations of the study

In this last section of this chapter I declare the limitations of the study, together with how the limitations were dealt with. Acknowledging limitations is about appreciating the constraints imposed on the study (Vithal & Jansen, 2010). The first limitation is the focus on academics only and not on any other higher education stakeholders. Focusing on academics only might have resulted in obtaining one-sided views on the practices, on what can affect quality in teaching as well as on the institutional quality processes. Students were not asked about academics' quality practices. However, focusing on one higher education stakeholder, turned out to be strength in this study in that academics were studied in depth instead of focusing on two or more stakeholders at a superficial level. The second limitation in this study is the focus on academics working on the satellite campus used as a case study. In order to deal with this limitation, I ensured that I sampled varied academics in terms of different characteristics. Furthermore, I read widely on satellite campuses to obtain a deeper understanding of the importance of choosing one case and on the uniqueness of satellite campuses. Actually, studying academics on one campus and in one institution, turned out to be strength in this study in that one institution was studied in depth instead of focusing on two or more at a superficial level. Furthermore, the study allowed for a deeper understanding of the experiences of academics on one campus.

The third limitation is that of not having used observations and focus groups, some of the other data generation methods commonly used in qualitative research. However, the use of interviews and documents compensated to some extent for this limitation around data collection. Another limitation is that during the interviews, some participants may have forgotten to report some practices and I relied on the practices that they reported to be implementing and on the documents they provided me. Creswell (2014) notes that one of the limitations of interviews is that information could be filtered through the views of the interviewees. Interviewees may have forgotten to tell me about some experiences as they had to think spontaneously. To overcome this limitation, participants were informed that they were free to share any other information after the interviews (in person or on e-mail) that they thought they may have missed. One participant did send a follow up e-mail a day after the interview.

Transcribing and analysis of the interviews was time consuming and was considered a limitation because of the limited time available as I was working as a full time academic and was a married black woman with many cultural responsibilities. However, transcribing formed the basis on which to understand the data, as the recording had to be played over and over again and checked against the transcripts to see if I had missed anything. The time spent in transcribing is not wasted; it informs the early stages of the analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

On the limitations related to the documents, at first participants were not comfortable to give me the documents which they considered to be indications of the quality practices they implemented. This challenge was overcome by requesting the documents numerous times until they provided the documents.

5.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, the research paradigm as well as the research approach adopted in this study has been explained. The study took the form of a qualitative case study in an interpretive paradigm. Chapter Five further provided details about how participants were sampled which was by means of purposive and convenient sampling. Details of the participants were

provided, which showed that participants varied in gender, age, qualifications, discipline, as well as number of years working at SAUT.

Semi-structured interviews and documents provided by academics were discussed as the data generation methods adopted in this study together with an explanation of how the data were analysed.

In line with the interpretive paradigm of acknowledging the presence of the researcher, Chapter Five proceeded to discuss the positionality of the researcher. In this section I presented reasons why I embarked on a PhD journey, how I became interested in this research area, the envisaged benefits of embarking on this journey and the benefits and challenges of being an insider researcher. I further explain the ethical principles observed in the study together with the means of enhancing trustworthiness of the study. The chapter ends with acknowledging the limitations of the study together with an explanation of how the limitations were dealt with.

Having now presented the methodology adopted in this study, Chapters Six, Seven and Eight discuss the findings of the study. These chapters precede the theoretical chapter (Chapter Nine).

CHAPTER SIX: CLASSROOM AND STUDENT RELATED QUALITY PRACTICES REPORTED BY ACADEMICS

6.1 Introduction

Chapter Five presented the research methodology adopted in this study for the purposes of data generation in order to answer the research questions. This chapter, the first of the analysis chapters, addresses the question of what practices academics regard as quality practices in teaching. The chapter further addresses the question of the relationship between these practices and institutional policy. The data analysed in respect of this question, were the interviews and documents provided by the nine academics at SAUT campus X. The data were analysed by firstly identifying what practices were repeatedly and commonly referred to by the academics and then quantified. This initial analysis of data led to identifying ten categories of practices. The most common quality practice referred to by all nine academics, were teaching strategies. At the opposite end of the scale, the category referred to by only one academic was identified as selection and enrolment of students. The practices found in the data are presented in Figure 2.

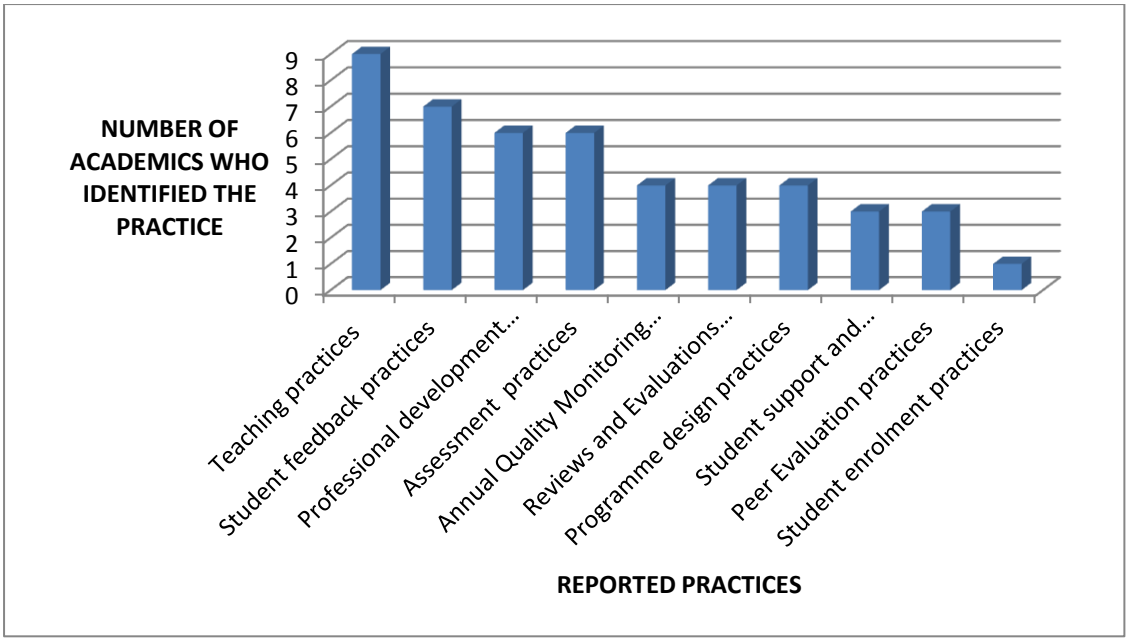

Figure 2: Quality practices in teaching as reported by academics in this study

The ten categories were further analysed and found to be related to two main features - the first being quality practices that highlight students or academic peers; and the second being those that refer to the context of the classroom or the institution. A further analysis of the categories led to the grouping of practices in the classroom with those related to students; and practices outside the classroom related to the institution and academic peers. The first group of quality practices, those referring to classroom and student-related quality practices which were prioritised by academics are discussed further in this chapter. The second group which refers to institutional and peer related quality practices are discussed in the next chapter.

This chapter which presents the quality practices identified by academics related to the context of the classroom and their students is discussed by juxtaposing the reported practices with the institutional expectations discussed in Chapter Four in order to ascertain the policy practice nexus. Institutional and peer related quality practices will be similarly presented and discussed in Chapter Seven.

In this chapter, four quality practices in teaching related to the classroom and students are discussed. These are teaching, assessment, student feedback and student support. Each practice is presented in the following manner: the practice is introduced; evidence from the data is provided to illustrate the practice; and the practice is explained; discussed and compared to institutional policy. Each practice reported by academics concludes with a discussion on how it links or does not link to what has been written in the literature.

6.2 Teaching practices

The literature recognises that teaching strategies are an important foundation in determining the quality in teaching (Killen, 2010). It is not surprising that the study found that quality in teaching was enhanced when diverse teaching practices and strategies are used in the classroom. Findings from data in the interviews and document analysis suggest that academics refer primarily to teaching practices they engage in the classroom and those around preparation for their teaching as quality practices in teaching. The classroom related practices reportedly engaged are wide ranging and include delivering lectures, providing explanations to students to make the discipline accessible to students, providing opportunities for students to give presentations in class, preparing students for the workplace, developing

students' critical skills and designing online classes. Practices related to preparation for teaching mainly referred to developing materials for teaching.

6.2.1 Delivering a lecture

The way that academics teach can be an indicator of quality. The way they deliver a lecture in the classroom, is regarded as a potential quality practice in teaching. Jane explains this as follows:

> *With us lecturers specifically the way you deliver a lecture will determine the standard and the quality and how the students are receiving it*

Furthermore what academics associate with quality in delivering a lecture is described in a number of different ways. For Celiwe, a presentation tool to deliver lectures is considered to be a quality practice in teaching. She explains that using presentation software such as Power Point enhances quality in teaching during lecture delivery as it is seen as a formal presentation tool. Using technology during teaching is associated with raising quality (Pavlina, et al. 2011; Sentilkumar & Arulraj, 2011). Moreover, using technology in teaching is one of the distinctive features of a University of Technology (du Prè, 2009).

For Albert, another quality practice in teaching is that of asking students to give presentations in class:

> *The main thing in ……(*the name of the subject*) currently is the oral. They no longer do the oral on the other campus, in this campus we continued to do orals.*

He explains that because most communication in the working world happens orally, promoting oral communication is *an issue of quality*. Albert mentions that on the other campus they have discontinued the orals and this could be associated with large number of students on the main campus as compared to the small number in a satellite campus. The practice of asking students to give presentations in class is also identified in the AQM report provided by Celiwe. She wrote:

> *Students are expected to prepare short seminar presentations as part of their learning. This encourages them to read and conduct research while shaping their critical thinking as well as public speaking skills* (Document C1)

At the institutional level, asking students to give presentations in class is in line with the expectation of promoting participation during teaching and developing the required graduate

attributes as stated in the 'Strategic Plan' document (South African University of Technology, 2015). Leibowitz, et al. (2017) also finds that their participants expressed that requiring students to talk in the classrooms is linked to quality.

Yet another practice that Celiwe identifies as a quality practice in teaching is developing students' critical skills:

> **Celiwe***: ……..quality teaching is not about the lecturer standing and delivering the lecture. It also means we teach students and how do we provide additional critical skills*
>
> ***Khethiwe: What do you mean by critical skills?***
>
> Celiwe*: For example, thinking skills and problem solving skills, asking students to situate themselves in a particular situation and then solve problems.*

This practice of developing students' critical skills is in line with the institutional expectation that students should attain certain skills (South African University of Technology, n.d), which include critical skills and problem solving. In his book titled *Teaching strategies for quality teaching and learning,* Killen (2010) links the encouragement of students to think critically with quality. He views critical thinking as the evaluation of ideas while problem solving is the promotion of deep understanding and application of ideas to real life situations. Sikhwari, et al. (2015) state that when students are asked to solve problems in class, their performance may be enhanced, which is linked to student success and quality. This practice of developing critical skills can be linked to the practice of preparing students for the workplace discussed under 6.2.3. Hènard and Roseveare, (2012) suggest that one practice for fostering quality is to equip students with skills, knowledge, values and attributes in order to enter the working world successfully.

The reporting of delivery of lectures as a quality practice resonates with the institutional policy documents which advocate the use of a variety of delivery options (South African University of Technology, 2009c). This is also discussed under Goal 3 in the 'Strategic Goals and Objectives' (South African University of Technology, 2009c), which deals with quality teaching and learning across all programmes, campuses and sites of delivery. It is up to academics to *explore a variety of delivery options* and then decide which options are most suitable for a particular module. Good delivery skills that help students understand and concentrate are also linked to quality in teaching (Shaik, et al. 2017).

6.2.2 Providing explanations to students to make the disciplinary discourse accessible

Another quality practice in teaching in the classroom was Jane's provision to her students of definitions of terminology so that the students could become familiar with the language used. She reports that:

> *So students find it very difficult to understand the concepts. It* (the module) *is fairly new to them, so I try by all means to give them* (students) *definitions of terminology*

Killen (2010), in referring to teaching strategies for quality teaching, states that teacher clarity is associated with presenting information in a way that learners find easy to understand. Furthermore, this practice indicates a positive attitude in this academic and a willingness to meet the needs of the students.

Providing explanations to students is in line with the expectation in the institutional policy documents that diverse needs of students should be accommodated (South African University of Technology, 2015) and that teaching methods and approaches should cater for different learning styles of students (South African University of Technology, n.d). Providing students with definitions of terms is an indication of being sensitive and catering for the needs of the students who struggle with new terminology. Additionally, at institutional level, one of the topics included in the staff induction programme is developing an understanding of SAUT students and appropriate means of serving them (South African University of Technology, 2007). Therefore, this practice reported by academics is aligned with the institutional policy which advocates understanding the students who are in the classroom. The literature also refers to the furtherance of quality through supporting academics to understand students as individuals with different learning needs (Austin & Sorcinelli 2013; Cheng 2014).

However not all academics in the study believe that responding to the needs of students enhances quality. Gilberto argues that academics are compromising quality when considering the needs of the students*:*

> *This institution has had to make a compromise and compromise quality. It is not that we staff who are working here are not top notch; it's just that we sometimes have to make some, sometimes difficult and unfortunate choices. Having to make a compromise between being seen as a university and catering to the needs of the students you know.*

This finding is similar to what was found by Akalu (2016) in that some academics in an Ethiopian context have a view that sometimes quality is severely compromised by teaching mediocre students. The data reveals that what one academic may view as a good quality practice, another academic may consider as a compromise of quality.

The data further indicate that there is unwillingness on the part of some academic staff to *explain difficult words* to students. Haizel states:

> *They (*academics*) are giving quality lectures but are refusing to compromise and explain difficult words or go over and over and over it* (subject material) *because the students are not understanding. I am going to say this because I know this conversation is confidential. I think some people know the reality regarding our students but they are not prepared to make allowances.*

The view is that there seems to be a need for some academics to better understand the strengths and weaknesses of the students and that there should be a willingness by academics to assist students with their academic needs. This was contrary to what was reported by Jane as presented earlier in that one of the quality practices is making disciplinary discourse accessible to students during lectures in an attempt to cater for the needs of the students. Mammen (2006) stresses that academics must go down to the level of the students in the explanations and considers this to be a transformative model of quality.

These views indicate that catering for the needs of the students can have an impact on quality practices implemented by academics particularly in the way they provide explanations for new and difficult concepts and the way they make the discipline accessible.

6.2.3 Preparing students for the workplace

When academics identified practices such as providing opportunities for students to give presentations in class, the academics explained these as beneficial to students because through preparing for presentations and executing those presentations in front of their classmates, students develop critical, organisational and oral communication skills which are

important for the workplace. Preparing students for the workplace is regarded as one of the quality practices in teaching. Jane stated that:

> *With them* (third year students) *I do less lecturing and I help them to be able to apply the knowledge, so I give them more application questions to try and gear them up for commerce and industry.*

She attempts to offer training that is in line with preparing students for future employment as reflected in the institutional policy expectations that students need to be prepared for the world of work (South African University of Technology, 2009c).

Preparation for the workplace is reflected in the institution's 'Experiential Learning Policy' document (South African University of Technology, 2006). Academics, however, regard preparing students for WIL to be a quality practice but also note that it can still be improved in the institution:

> *Remember I have a lecturing job therefore it will be too much for me to prepare students for WIL as well. I feel that more needs to be done in order to prepare the students for the world of work. These current sessions (*facilitated by someone not teaching in the programme*) are definitely not enough because we are getting phone calls from industry that your students are not prepared for work - this is the story and that is the story. If we tell the students how to carry themselves it will go a long way, then we are not going to have these phone calls from industry saying there is a student we don't want to see any longer* (Edith).

Teaching students how to carry themselves in the workplace is an important aspect as is the way students conduct themselves during WIL, which might be read by employers as an indication of the teaching quality in the institution. The quotation above indicates the tension between *a lecturing job* and preparing students for WIL. The institution expects that orientation of students for WIL is achieved via a work-preparedness program (South African University of Technology, 2006). Nduna (2012) states that although WIL is long established in UoTs, it is left for employers to implement. Most academics seem to shy away from WIL implementation due to perceived increase in workload (Govender & Wait, 2017). This was not the case in this institution, this academic indicated that she is responsible for placing students for WIL.

Edith is of the view that the institution needs to pay more attention to preparing students for WIL. Work placements have the potential to contribute effectively to quality in higher education (Kettis, et al. 2013). Hence WIL is considered an important component of quality and this is recognised by academics as well as the institutional policy documents and the

literature. Furthermore, higher education institutions have an important role in preparing future-fit graduates ready for the workplace (Govender & Wait, 2017). The consensus is that institutions need to play an active role in preparing students to understand what is expected of them in the workplace. The institutional policy documents advocate that WIL should be conceptualised and designed in all programmes (South African University of Technology, n.d) and that there should be communication between academic staff, students and employers during WIL. The institution expects all programmes to contain a module or set of modules designed to prepare students for WIL (South African University of Technology, n.d).

6.2.4 Designing online classes

Academics report designing online classes as a quality practice. Albert states that he *recently started creating online classes.* This is in line with an extensive institutional focus to offer most of the subjects in a blended approach which includes combining face- to- face teaching and online teaching. The policies in the institution expect that e-learning should be integrated as a teaching and learning strategy (South African University of Technology, 2013a; South African University of Technology, 2013b; South African University of Technology, 2015; South African University of Technology, n.d) and that academics experiment with new technologies (South African University of Technology, 2013b).

It was not surprising that academics report creating online classes, as online arrangements constitute a teaching practice (Bolldèn, 2016b) in higher education. Furthermore online teaching has become a common phenomenon within higher education (Bolldèn, 2016a) and is linked to quality. Online course quality is one of the drivers of student satisfaction (Tratnik, Urh & Jereb, 2017).

Academics not only report designing online classes. They further express different views about them. Rakes and Dunn (2015) advocate that it is important to understand how teachers feel about teaching online and concerns should be addressed. The academics in the study express both negative and positive views regarding the institutional move to online teaching. The first negative view concerns class time:

> *Now and again we are asked about how we use new technology, but we know and whoever is asking that question knows it takes ten minutes to set up at the beginning of a class these new technologies in a 50 minute period. Then students need to leave*

> *for the next class ten minutes before the end of the lesson. So that is almost half of the time is gone already. Whereas you can just use a board which does not require any set up. So all this Blackboard and whatever it is an undue insistence* (Gilberto).

This resonates with Rakes and Dunn's, (2015) assertion that there is an additional time management burden to teachers because of online teaching. There are new demands on staff time associated with using technology in teaching (Austin & Sorcinelli 2013). Hence time constraints influence the extent to which academics design and use online classes as one of the quality practices in teaching.

Moreover, the second concern about the use of technology in online teaching is the possible increase in workloads, which involve both maintaining the classroom and online interactions. Teaching online does not mean a disembodied existence but it means straddling an online-offline situation (Bolldèn, 2016a). Furthermore, the focus on online teaching has resulted in an increase in workload in that staff has to learn a new skill (Hemer, 2014).

The third concern and negative view was the unsuitability of the online classrooms for current students:

> *You know this idea of giving each student a tablet that kind of thing and focusing on online teaching. All this emphasis on for example online teaching. There are fantastic plans but so often I think those online resources are above the level of the average students who come here* (Haizel).

Haizel remarks that the use of online classroom as one of the quality practices and as an indicator of quality is not suitable for students who are registered at this institution. This could refer to the calibre of students registered in the institution, the background of the students as well as their preparedness for higher education. It was noted that:

> *Sometimes if I go to open source materials in other universities some of it* (the open source materials) *is way above the level of the student. Especially, South African students. I mean you know, it's about not allowing me to do what I think it's the best. Our students, so many of them are, you know, I have just marked a test the marks range between 3 % and 90 %. But to me I think that student is not ready go online if he or she cannot write properly just battling with basic things. Some of them have never written an English sentence in their lives before it is what the teacher told them in school. So I think they are starting in the wrong place, they are up there. They haven't got the basics of poor grounding from the schools that is what I am really saying (*Haizel*).*

This quotation indicates that this academic believes e-readiness of students and pre-tertiary background need to be carefully considered as a starting point, before the introduction of online teaching. She believes that online teaching is currently not appropriate for the students registered in the institution.

The fourth concern and negative view about online teaching is the way in which it has been introduced in the institution:

> *Haizel: I think that there is less academic freedom to teach how you think you should teach*
>
> ***Khethiwe: Okay, so currently there is less academic freedom?***
>
> *Haizel: Yes, then when I was at a traditional university, which was long time ago there was more freedom there.*
>
> ***Khethiwe**: O**kay***
>
> *Haizel: But maybe it was just my naïve interpretation but they had a lot more freedom. It is too prescriptive here – you will do this, you will* (strong voice) *have 50 % of your courses online by next year. I mean what kind of academic freedom is that?*

This finding concurs with Tadesse (2014) who found that academic staff members have complained about over prescriptive teaching and assessment policies in an Ethiopian context. The implementation of policies may appear to run counter to influential traditions of autonomy and cherished values of academic freedom (Scott, 2017). The transcript above indicates that the introduction of online teaching in the institution is associated with academics not being given a chance to be creative and not being allowed to think of various ways of doing things without being dictated to. The impact on academic freedom by various quality initiatives including the introduction of online teaching has been noted by various authors (Luckett, (2007); Taylor, (2009); Singh, (2010); Hare, (2012); Shah and Jarzabkowski (2013)). The introduction of online teaching, allocation of more power to managers (Cardoso, et al. 2016) and a new managerialism in higher education (Castle, 2013) all, according to one academic in my study, erode quality.

The fifth concern and negative view regarding online teaching observed by several academics was its lack of use by students:

> *Black board tells you how many students have logged in. Even people who have used Blackboard for so many years complain that students do not use these classrooms* (Fana)

This quotation indicates a perceived lack of motivation by students to use online classrooms. Results by Tratnik, et al. (2017) show that students are generally less motivated to study online which requires motivation, time management and self-discipline from the side of the student. The lack of use of online classrooms by students could further be associated with their access to resources required for online teaching and learning.

The sixth concern and negative view is about the resource priorities and a lack of other basic resources in the institution:

> *This is the technology that is out of place here. That money should have been used for proper desks, air conditioning at least* (Gilberto).

The negative views and concerns by academics regarding online teaching indicate that although online teaching is a burgeoning field (Rakes & Dunn, 2015), some academics in this study are somehow reluctant to teach online and to use online teaching as a means of enhancing quality. The findings indicate that some lack interest in online teaching and some hold opinions that face- to-face teaching is currently more appropriate than online teaching.

However, there are also two positive views raised by academics on this topic. The first positive view is that online teaching offers staff an opportunity for improving quality. Thus the belief was that technology will improve quality in teaching and students will adjust:

> *I think our students are very keen and are very hyped up about web-based learning and e-learning and mobile learning all those things. Students are very fond of using the cellphones and the internet from there. So they are quite smart and I think that they will be able to adapt to technology being part of learning* (Jane).

This quotation points to a positive attitude towards students (*smart*) and towards using technology in teaching. Another positive view regarding online learning is that:

> *……It is quite nice cause I have designed it (*an online course*) in such a way that it could run online as much as possible. It could run once or twice a week face- to- face. Depending on how the Diploma or the advanced Diploma is structured. Students will be given a choice as to which year to take the course, because they can take it in any point* (Albert).

This indicates a view that online teaching and learning minimises face-to-face contact and offers flexibility between the lecturer and the students.

6.2.5. Developing materials

The four teaching practices discussed so far refer primarily to teaching practices within the classroom as quality practices in teaching. However, academics also report preparation for teaching as a quality practice, in particular, developing teaching and learning materials such as notes, study guides and course packs. Developing notes is identified during the interview with Edith:

> ***Khethiwe:*** ***So, how do you assure quality in your teaching? In your own classroom?***
>
> *Edith:*
>
> *(*Participant breaths in very deeply*) Yohhh – (*laughs*) In my classroom I aim to heee* (hesitation). *What I do to ensure quality firstly you know I research my topic in depth. I prepare the notes well before the semester even starts. Like during the holidays we've just come out of. I was preparing notes, making complementary notes you know over and above what is contained in the study guide. That is one of the ways I improve quality.*

This practice of preparing notes is advocated in the institutional academic policies. The institution's 'Academic Staff Promotions Policy' (South African University of Technology, 2013b) states that in order for academics to be promoted from junior lecturer to lecturer to senior lecturer levels, they must demonstrate participation in planning and development of materials. The findings further indicate a possible gap in the institutional policy. While one of the practices reported is researching the topic in depth in order to develop materials, the institutional policy documents seem to be silent on the guidelines regarding how materials are to be developed and do not explicitly link research and materials development.

Another academic refers to the development of a study guide as a way of developing teaching materials. During the individual interview with Gilberto, he explains that he prepared a study guide for students and later provides me with two study guides (Document G1 and G2). Document G1 is a study guide that was left behind by his predecessor and document G2 is his own study guide that he compiled after being appointed in the institution. During the interview, Gilberto explaines that he was not happy with the quality of the material that was left by his predecessor. He explains that he therefore revised the study guide by drastically reducing it. However Hemer (2014, p. 491) finds that academics provide comprehensive information through course outlines, and links this to quality which is contrary to the *slim* version promoted by this academic. Furthermore Gilberto judges that the previous study

guide concentrated on teaching the culture not the language when this was a language discipline. According to this academic, when developing materials, the extent of the teaching material plays an important role as well as the purpose of the subject.

The revised study guide is in line with the format provided by the institution. It is expected in the institution that the study guides are developed according to the institutional study guide template. However the institution does not stipulate the expected length of the study guide. Landrum and Smith (2007) note that the information contained in the study guide is the centrepiece of any course and considers this to be one of the best practices.

In addition to the practices of developing notes and study guides, the study further found that academics make materials available to students:

> *Students are given a course pack which encourages them to read the sections to be discussed before the class; this creates an environment for the two-way discussion and picking up of problem areas beforehand (*Document C1).

This practice thus relates to academics providing students with teaching and learning materials before the lecture begins, thus promoting collaboration between academics and students during teaching and learning. Making course notes available is in line with the institutional policy, in that the institution expects learning materials to be accessible to students (South African University of Technology, 2009c) and to be appropriate for the level of the programme (South African University of Technology, 2013a). Shaik, et al. (2017) advocate that available learning materials and learning resources are a pre-requisite for provision of quality.

6.3 Assessment practices

Assessment of student learning constitutes a very important element of quality (Harvey & Williams, 2010b), signalling the seriousness of the institution about quality. In this study, assessment practices are described in terms of deciding on the type of the assessment, preparing students for assessments, setting assessment tasks, working with assessment results and providing feedback after the assessments.

6.3.1 Deciding on the type of assessment

At SAUT, student learning is assessed by means of a final examination at the end of the year or semester or by means of continuous assessment. These two types of assessment practices are supported by two academics as quality practices. However, academics have opposite views about them.

Gilberto argues his preference for continuous assessment:

> *Okay let me tell you about* ……(name of the subject*). In this campus students do* …….(name of the subject) *in first year only. On the other campus they do* ……(name of the subject) *up to third year. I was told when I came here that students need to write a three hour exam and yet those students who do* ……..(name of the subject) *up to third year level* (on the other campus), *do not write an exam. This was a joke, but it took me three years of fighting. This is going to be a first year when they won't be writing* (an exam). *It caused me a lot of problems and nobody could justify*.

Gilberto's view is that an examination is not suitable for his particular module as it is offered for one year only. He believes that it needs continuous assessment, not examinations. The findings clearly indicate that, according to some academics, there is a distinct difference between these two forms of assessment and the subjects in which they could be applied. As a result, there is tension in deciding between the two. Gilberto fought for the change to continuous assessment and for him this was a quality practice. When asked how this fight for continuous assessment relates to quality in teaching, he explains that if students were to write an exam for his particular subject, "it will simply mean that they knew the rules of the subject*"*. It appears that this academic requires students to know more than just the rules of the subject. Gilberto further explains that*:*

> *this is an indication of the minds of the people who are in charge of the system, they do not seem to be caring. It is like throwing a baby* (the students) *in a swimming pool and expect a baby to be able to swim.*

While Gilberto argues strongly for continuous assessments, and for him this is an important quality practice, Haizel has an opposite view. Haizel mentions during the interview that she was not happy when her module was changed to continuous assessment. However she cannot justify her preference for examinations over continuous assessment. Haizel and Gilberto are from the same Faculty and both teach language subjects. However they have different views

regarding examinations and continuous assessment. This indicates that assessment can be a contentious issue but how academics assess could have implications for quality.

The institutional policy leaves academics to decide which assessment is suitable for which module. The institution expects academics to contextualise their assessment practices (South African University of Technology, 2008) and thereby achieve quality in teaching. The policy is not prescriptive on what assessments academics can use.

6.3.2 Preparing students for assessments

Preparing students for assessments is reported as a quality practice in teaching. One academic explains that, on the day of our interview, he had taught students the language of assessment. The reason he did this was to help students understand the different assessment terms. Albert explaineds hat he taught '*the language of assessment in order to deal with notion of the wise testing the unwise'*. He explained that his main aim was '*to bring assessment into (a) more studentcentred approach'*. The studentcentred philosophy is evident in the different institutional policies dealing with assessment (see 4.5.5). Thus, according to this academic, teaching students the different terms used in assessments, is in line with this philosophy and is related to quality. Albert wanted to ensure that students were well prepared for the assessments and they understood the assessment questions better. He explained that:

> *So today, I wanted students to learn how to compile questions and understand the difference between explain, describe, differentiate, discuss, analyse etc. I taught the language of assessment.*

This quality practice is in line with institutional policy that assessment should be an integral part of teaching and learning (South African University of Technology, n.d; South African University of Technology, 2013a). This practice is also in line with Boud and Associates (2010) in that assessment informs teaching and teaching informs assessment.

Other assessment practices relates to preparing students for assessments are '*providing focus questions and encouraging self-assessment'*. These were evident in the document provided by one academic as she writes:

> *…..there are focus questions provided for each section in the course. Students are encouraged to do self-assessments through these questions* (Document C1).

By providing students with focus questions for each section, Celiwe is enacting the institutions' expected practice that assessment tasks should be made explicit to students. From using the questions for self-assessment, students can develop a better understanding of the type of questions to expect in the formative or summative assessment and thus be better prepared. This can be understood as promoting the idea that students are partners in assessment practices. Boud and Associates (2010) are of the view that allowing students to self–assess encourages student involvement in the assessments.

6.3.3 Setting assessment tasks

The study found that setting assessment tasks is considered a quality practice. This included setting assessments and choosing the type of questions to be contained in the assessment:

> ……(name of the person) *believed that because we are dealing with a huge number of students, the only way to deal with the amount of work was to have multiple choice questions only in a test. For me that is wrong, when you trying to see whether the students are improving their writing skills you cannot test that in a multiple choice – You just can't. So we made a decision that we will have some true or false questions and also questions that really assess their* (students) *writing* (Haizel).

Setting assessments is in line with institutional policy as it states that in most cases academics will play the role of assessor (South African University of Technology, 2014). Data relating to choosing the type of questions to be included in the assessment indicate that assessment practices are not conducted according to what is specified by module co-ordinators or programme co-ordinators or even HoDs. Academics seem to accept or reject some practices (in this case setting multiple choice only questions) if they believe that particular assessment is not in line with the intended outcomes of the module and they further link this to quality. Academics make their own decisions regarding the content of the question paper depending on various factors such as the number of students in the classroom. As discussed in Chapter One, there is the challenge of a growing number of students in public universities. The quotation above reveals that the growing number of students has the potential to affect assessment practices, with academics tending to adopt multiple choice questions to deal with huge numbers.

The institutional policies state that academics are responsible for designing assessments. However they are silent on the type of questions to be included in the assessment and on the ratio of the different question types in a particular assessment. This is left entirely up to academics to decide. Furthermore, the institution is silent on the guidelines for setting multiple choice questions. The institution states that the way students are assessed determines what and how they learn (South African University of Technology, n.d), demonstrating the link it recognises between assessment and quality.

The study further found that there is a practice related to ensuring the integrity, security and the credibility of the assessments, once they have been set. This was reported by Haizel when she explained that they '*make sure that students write the same test'* for any one course/module, irrespective of their lecturer and irrespective of the programme they are registered for. This practice also refers to ensuring the reliability and the validity of the assessment and is in line with the institutional policy in that academics are to ensure the security arrangements regarding assessments to ensure integrity of assessments (South African University of Technology, 2014). Makondo (2014) asserts that university lecturers should be trained to design and handle assessments so that quality is not compromised.

6.3.4 Working with assessment results

The study further found that academics analyse student assessment results such as test results, as well as overall student performance in a particular subject/module at the end of a year or semester. Fana reports that this is done in order to check quality in teaching. Additionally, the practice of analysing students' results is evident in Document B3 provided by Brian and Document I2 provided by Isaac. Document I2 indicates that for the same module, one group had an average pass rate of 80 % whereas the other group had an average pass rate of 69 % and yet Isaac was the lecturer for both groups, teaching students the same subject. The document which Isaac provided does not indicate how the analysis of the pass rates contributes to enhancing quality in teaching. However the practice of analysing student results is in line with the institutional policy. The institution states that data gathered should promote improvement in both performance of students and in the curriculum (South African University of Technology, 2013a).

Another academic who reports analysing student results states the following as reasons for implementing this practice:

> *to identify the problem areas, to understand what the students are failing to understand and to identify students at risk* (Jane).

Jane's explanation of her practice is in line with the institution's policy that there should be clear processes and procedures for identifying students at risk (South African University of Technology, 2013a). The practice of analysing student results is viewed by another academic as offering an indication of what needs to be changed regarding teaching:

> *The other thing is obviously the results of your assessments. They give you an indication in terms of what you have to change and help those students who may not have adapted to your style of teaching* (Fana).

It is further reported that some academics go the extra mile when analysing assessments. Jane further explains during the interview that she was aware of some lecturers who analyse how the students have answered each question in an assessment. This practice of analysing how each question is answered in an assessment is not an expected practice in the institution. However some academics have decided to implement this practice in order to gain insight into their students' understanding of each section. According to Jane this can enhance quality in teaching. Jane therefore, although she stated she has not implemented this practice, regards this as a quality practice and would also like to implement it.

Another way in which academics work with assessment results is conducting reassessments after marking the assessment. Gilberto explaind that:

> *I sometimes give them* (students) *a chance to write more tests. Well I am not sure if this is allowed. But I am giving them a chance to do well*.

Reassessment of students' learning is an expected practice according to the institution's 'Assessment Policy' (South African University of Technology, 2014), which affords students the opportunity for reassessment. However the institution mainly refers to reassessment of examinations whereby students qualify for supplementary examinations, and is silent on re-assessment for continuous assessment subjects. Thus this is an indication that assessment practices are not always implemented as stated in the policy and there is a lack of awareness regarding the expectations stated in the policy documents.

6.3.5 Providing students with feedback after their assessment

Allocating sufficient time for marking assessments in order to provide students with feedback after assessments is regarded as a quality practice. However the institutional expectation of entering assessment marks on the system within ten working days (South African University of Technology, 2008; South African University of Technology, 2013a; South African University of Technology, 2014) is identified as having a negative impact on the type of feedback which can be provided to students. The concern is that there is a tension between the time stipulated by the institution as an acceptable turnaround time (ten days for marking, sending a sample of scripts for moderation, returning assessments to students and entering marks on the system) and the quality of feedback which can be given to students within that stipulated period:

> *This is another quality issue; is the ten-day turnaround time when marking assessments for example 8-10 page assignments from 80 students. Correcting grammar, correcting their writing, referencing etc etc. This is sometimes impossible when marking detailed assignments and then students will mark you down* (on the student evaluations questionnaires) *on that aspect* (Celiwe).

Academics are expected to report on the effectiveness of feedback given to students on their performance (South African University of Technology, 2013a) when writing AQM reports (See 7.3.). This expectation is supported by Hoskin and Newstead (2009) who argue that feedback with sufficient details should be given to students to avoid demotivation. Hence, it is important to provide students with proper feedback so that they can be motivated and encouraged to excel. It should be informative (Ashcroft & Foreman-Peck, 1995) and should contain sufficient details which can be helpful to students (Hoskins & Newstead, 2009).

6.4 Student feedback practices

Academics report elicitating formal and informal feedback from students regarding teaching as quality practices. Student feedback practices are also classified as classroom and student related quality practices because they mainly involve students and they take place in the classroom. In respect of formal feedback academics mainly refer to conducting student evaluations and providing students with feedback regarding what they wrote on the

evaluations. Under eliciting informal feedback, academics refer to obtaining verbal feedback from students. The main focus is on formal feedback which is commonly referred to by academics as one of the ways in which they obtain feedback from students.

6.4.1 Eliciting formal feedback

Obtaining formal feedback is one of the quality practices in teaching and it mainly refers to conducting module and lecturer evaluations. To illustrate this quality practice, Brian provided me with one of his completed institutional module evaluation forms as well as a completed lecturer evaluation form (Document B2) as indications of obtaining formal feedback from students. At SAUT, student evaluation forms which represent a formal means of obtaining feedback from students are standardized forms obtained from the Quality Unit. As discussed under section 4.5.7, these forms are called Subject Evaluation Questionnaires (SEQs) and Lecturer Evaluation Questionnaires (LEQs). Lecturers are expected to elicit feedback from students with respect to both the module and the lecturer (South African University of Technology, 2013a).

This finding of obtaining formal feedback from students using evaluation forms is in line with the institutional expectation that quality in teaching and learning should be evaluated regularly (South African University of Technology, 2009) by means of obtaining feedback from a variety of sources. The institution refers to a variety of sources: students, industry and alumni. Furthermore, the institution promotes the involvement of students in monitoring and evaluating of quality in teaching. The findings of obtaining formal feedback from students is in line with Muraru's (2012) assertion that quality management in higher education is mostly "excavated" using student feedback. In another institution in South Africa, Dhunpath, et al. (2016) confirm that student evaluation of teaching is a practice to assure quality.

Academics shed light on a number of issues connected with obtaining feedback from students using institutional evaluation forms. There are issues related to the administration of student evaluations, feedback to academics from the Quality Unit, feedback to academics from students as well as the use and value of student evaluations.

6.4.1.1 Administration of student evaluations

In respect of administration of student evaluations, academics raise varying views about the frequency of conducting evaluations, the responsibility for administering forms to students, the responsibility for quality in the institution, keeping records of information related to student evaluations as well as the time required to administer evaluations.

Firstly, academics vary on how often they administer the evaluations. Some do so once a semester or once a year and others every two years. These variations are evident in the following transcripts:

> *Hee, we have what we call the SEQs and the LEQs, which we do every year. The subject evaluations and the lecturer evaluations. Which we do on a yearly basis. Well I do them on a semester basis. Ya I do them every semester* (Edith)

> *We do SEQs and LEQs every year but not for every subject, I think the LEQs are supposed to be every three years* (Albert)

A third variation reported is the administration of student evaluations every two years. This is indicated by Celiwe who explains that they evaluate each module every two years. The institutional policy documents at SAUT state that subject evaluations are to be conducted once per semester for semester programmes and once per annum for annual programmes (South African University of Technology, 2013a). Thus administering forms every two years is a deviation from the policy.

Secondly, academics have different views regarding who is supposed to administer the form to students. The study found that there is a disjuncture between who administers the evaluations and who academics think is supposed to administer them. The following transcript indicates that this academic administers his own evaluations:

> *it is easy to administer these things. You just give the forms to students and give them some time to complete them and ask them to fill it in* (Fana).

Another academic reports that she asks the class representative (although she contradicts herself) to administer the student evaluations:

> *I have just administered these questionnaires. I did not administer it; I have been giving my class rep to administer these because I do not want students to feel intimidated in any way* (Jane).

Although some academics administer their own forms, as indicated in the previous and in the following quote, there are views that this should not be the case:

> *The fact that I administer them* (student evaluations)*; it means I am a judge and party. Actually why the Quality Unit does not administer these themselves? What are they doing that is so important? What can stop me from throwing away those evaluations which I don't like? I haven't done it and I am not going to do it but what stops me?* (Gilberto)

There is further concern about the lack of presence of the Quality Unit on this campus:

> *I am sure if they were serious, they* (the Quality Unit) *would have been here as well. I am sure they should have been present on this campus as well (Gilberto)*
>
> *heeee I feel that it is a job of like ……..* (stating the name of the QPO in one of the faculties) *and them, to come and do these evaluations, they must come and do these evaluations* (Edith).
>
> *To be honest with you, from where I am coming from* (previous institution) *we used to dispute the processes because we would evaluate ourselves so there was no independent party. In a way one would influence students to answer in a favourable way* (Isaac).
>
> *You know when we as lecturers administer our own, there is a bit of bias there. Because the students get to think you know what, let me …..*(silence) *somehow or the other I feel that it is not a true reflection of what the students feel (Edith).*

These views indicate academics' concern about the possibility that results could be affected in some way when they, the academics, administer their own evaluation forms.

The institutional policy documents at SAUT (for example South African University of Technology, 2013a) state that ideally student evaluations should not be administered by the lecturer but the lecturer should arrange for someone else (a peer or a class rep) to administer the evaluations.

Findings further indicate different views regarding the responsibility for quality in the institution, with some advocating for quality to be decentralised, some advocating for a combination of the top-down approach and the bottom-up approach and some putting the

responsibility for quality mainly on the HoD. The preference for decentralising the responsibility for quality in the institution is indicated in the following conversation:

> ***Khethiwe: Okay but according to your opinion, who is mainly responsible for quality in the institution?***
>
> *Albert: Haaaaa the responsibility of quality should be decentralised*
>
> ***Khethiwe: What you mean by that?***
>
> *Albert: I think that within every programme should have someone who is a designated quality assurer, who may receive some credits or have two lectures less or whatever the case may be and that person I would say have at least six meetings a year with programme lecturers. That person will just keep the minutes of the meeting. In that way we will actually document what we doing currently on the corridors. That old saying that the grapevine is still the most powerful form of communication is true.*

This is an indication that there are some informal quality practices on the grounds which are currently not noticed. This finding is in line with Mårtensoon, et al. (2014) who is of the view that quality practices become embedded in social relations.

However, the view that the responsibility for quality should be decentralised in each department is not the view held by all academics. Brian thinks that the Quality Unit through various policy pronouncements is mainly responsible for quality as evident in this response:

> *Everyone is responsible for quality not just one person, but at the moment it is very much top down because I mean, the reason I say that is because of these requirements e.g. you must do LEQs at least once a year. If it wasn't for that, how are you ensuring the quality in your teaching? What other methods are lecturers using?*

This participant views the top-down approach towards quality as well as the institutional quality requirements as the only option (*if it wasn't for that)* for ensuring quality in teaching. This finding is in line with Masehela (2015) who also found that some academics embrace monitoring. This quotation also indicates that Brian is not aware of the other practices used by other academics to assure and enhance quality. Another academic, expressed acceptance of the current top down approach:

> ***Khethiwe: In your view, who is responsible for quality?***
>
> *Isaac: It's all of us. All of us are responsible. Obviously it will come from the top but all of us are responsible and must be involved in maintaining that quality*

Celiwe remarks that a combination of a top down approach as well as bottom up approach to quality should be used:

> *I think it should start from the top you know the lecturers, the HoD and the Dean and the Quality Unit. The other side after that I am not sure I think it also depends on the hierarchy, what CQPA does with what they get. But I think even from the lectures to really make an institution really serious about quality should also be bottom up – academics need to buy in.*

This finding further indicates uncertainty about the structure in the institution. This is in line with Cardoso, et al. (2016) who states that academics tend to have poor knowledge about structural frames.

Similar to Celiwe, another academic highlights her preference for a combination of the top down and the bottom up approach to quality in the following conversation:

> ***Khethiwe: But, in your opinion who is responsible for assuring quality in teaching? Is it the lecturer? The HoD?***
>
> *Edith: Ey, I think that it must be a combination of both. I think you must take responsibility as a lecturer to ensure that there is quality in your teaching. On the other hand I also believe that the onus rest with the HoD to ensure that lecturers are producing quality heee (hesitation) lessons for the students. You know. Maybe we can devise a template or something whereby the HoD can check your performance on a regular basis. Whether it is done right now I must say that I am not sure.*

Edith stressed the importance of the HoD to '*check the performance of academics'* and to ensure that '*lecturers are producing quality'*. The responsibility of the HoD in assuring quality was also highlighted in the following conversation:

> ***Khethiwe: In your view, whose responsibility is it to assure that there is quality teaching? Is it the lecturer? HoD? Dean?***
>
> ***Silence long silence***
>
> *Haizel: Mhhhhh I think the HoDs must do some monitoring role to ensure that the lecturers are doing what they supposed to be doing because you know the other person was taking time off to do other things. Heee at the end of the day I think that it is up to the lecturer*

As explained in Chapter Four, institutional documents locate the responsibility for quality in this institution with the Quality Unit, the Dean of the faculty the QPO, the HoD, the quality champion in the department as well as individuals in the institution, including academics.

There wea also concerns regarding the confusion about who is supposed to keep the records of the completed evaluations. The view is that:

> *We were once criticised for not keeping the records and analysis of the LEQs and SEQs but we felt strongly that almost in a sense that is what the Quality Unit should be doing. They should be holding on to that data. We should be having an overall report of the outcomes and then act on them* (Albert).

Fourthly, the time required to administer the student evaluations seems to be an administrative issue of concern to academics. This is apparent from Albert's assertion that '*there is no time for them'*. He further explains that in his case it is more difficult because he sees the students only once in the first year. This affects his ability to provide feedback to students regarding what they write on the evaluation forms. However, his concern can be challenged by ascertaining when he administers the evaluations. Narsimham (2001) is of the view that when student evaluations are administered at the end of the course, the feedback obtained cannot be used to improve that particular cohort of students. If student evaluations are administered at the end of the course, this can even affect the seriousness of students when completing these evaluations. The issue of time was also raised by another academic:

> *To find time to do it (*student evaluations*) and our HoD says do it if you have time. When you have a lecture available, even if you send them after the due date its fine. Still you must send them. I demand that you do them. Whereas you know the Quality Unit does not seem to realise that they make these closing dates for their convenience not ours. So I think the Quality Unit loses touch with the lecturers in the university classroom every day. I don't think they really know or care too much* (Haizel).

The previous quotation indicates that some academics are mandated to conduct student evaluations. Deadlines for submitting the forms provoke tension between academics and the Quality Unit. The Quality Unit publishes due dates for evaluation forms and academics are supposed to adhere to these dates. However, this quotation indicates that at times, academics submit forms after the due date. This tension was also noted by Lomas (2007) in that he found that academics believe that staff responsible for quality initiatives in the institution are seen as pariahs by academics.

Conducting student evaluations may be affected by student attendance:

> *….you end up doing them* (administering student evaluations) *this week and next week so that you can have good number of forms sent to the Quality Unit* (Celiwe).

This quotation indicates challenges regarding the response rate of these student evaluation questionnaires. This is in line with Harvey and Williams (2010) and Hammonds, et al. (2017) who noted the problem of low response rates of student evaluations.

Another administrative issue raised was regarding the time taken by the Quality Unit to process the forms:

> *……..the turnaround time is not all that fast for me. It took about a month for mine* (the evaluation forms) *to come back. But I understand that they* (the Quality Unit) *are very busy* (Edith).

6.4.1.2 Feedback to academics

Once the evaluation forms have been completed by students, the forms are sent to the Quality Unit for processing. There are different views with regards to the feedback to academics by the Quality Unit. That feedback is given in a composite report that is received after submitting the completed student evaluations. There are also different views regarding the feedback from students to academics.

The view concerning feedback to academics from the Quality Unit is that:

> *Those reports, I don't find them user friendly. They are computer generated and they come with those funny little graphs. The best part is scrolling down to read students' comments. From those comments you actually get something* (Albert).

This is an indication that this academic values students' comments in response to open ended questions more than the statistical part of the report which is an analysis of the closed questions. Preference for qualitative student comments is further supported by Brian:

> *The student comments at the end of the report are very interesting because you know, they (*students*) are writing from the heart.*

In respect of feedback to academics from students, some participants think that the form on which students give feedback about academics is at times difficult for the students to understand:

> *students do not even understand half the questions contained in the institutional evaluation forms* (Haizel).
>
> *These questionnaires have too many words. Students don't understand those questions they don't understand what the questionnaire is try to hee* (hesitation) *pick up from them* (Brian).
>
> *See I am a bit cynical. I mean, I genuinely feel that the students feel they must write something even if they don't really know what to write* (Haizel).

These views of academics regarding students and evaluation forms are in line with Nobaho, Aguti and Oonyu, (2016) who found that students regard evaluations as a form-filling or box ticking exercise which is an infringement on their time.

To solve this problem of a perceived lack of conceptual understanding of the evaluation form by students, there was a suggestion that:

> *We should each all be allowed to devise our own forms which will be relevant to our subjects* (Haizel).

In line with the current standardised form that is viewed as restricting academics in eliciting feedback from students, Hammonds, et al. (2017) put forward a proposal that both students and academics be involved in the development of student evaluation questionnaires.

6.4.1.3 The value and use of the evaluations

The value of student evaluations proved to be a contentious issue. Some academics do not seem to value this practice of conducting student evaluations and some although they conduct students' evaluations, do not seem to value comments written by students on these evaluation forms. Gilberto sees student evaluations as *a joke*. He explains that he had previously conducted student evaluations, but not that particular year:

> *Actually this year, I am not going to do those evaluations I've got more important things to do like drilling my classes to get ready for tests*.

This quotation further indicates that some academics reject some practices, in this case the administration of student evaluations and regard them as less important. The resistance of quality processes is also found by Anderson (2006) and Jibladze (2013). Resistance could be because academics judge that quality processes are not aligned with the academic endeavour and have little to do with inducing improvement (Cardoso, et al. 2016). The resistance may also be connected to the perceived drawback in that student evaluations can identify problems but never generate solutions (Feigenbaum & Iqani, 2015).

Academics also appear not to take student evaluations seriously because they see student evaluations as context dependent and reflective of things other than quality in teaching. The context dependence of evaluation forms is explained by Albert:

> *Any lecturer will tell you, the feedback you get from LEQs and SEQs is very context dependent. The feedback you get will depend on what is happening currently in your subject. If students have just received good results, they will give you a good review even if the quality of the assessment was not good. I don't think we should read too much into the LEQS and SEQs. But they do play a role.*

Receiving good evaluations after giving good results is termed by Hammonds, et al. (2017) as the reciprocity effect. This speaks to the timing of the evaluation forms which according to this academic can influence how students complete evaluation forms. This finding is supported by Lim (2009) who is of the view that academics themselves can influence how students respond to evaluation questionnaires by giving generous marks just before the administration of the evaluations. This academic further concluded that '*we should not read too much into'* the student evaluations, meaning that the information from student evaluations is not particularly valuable. This is in contrast with Puŝka, et al. (2016) who asserts that student opinions are important in enhancing quality.

Another reason for not valuing student evaluations is that academics construe things from the evaluation forms other than their teaching. They may read from the students' comments, information about the kind of relationship they have with the students:

> *I don't know if I am being harsh on myself but I think that those* (the evaluation forms) *are a reflection of a kind of a relationship I have with my students not necessarily the actual business of teaching* (Gilberto).

Comments may be influenced by the attitudes towards the lectures:

……..*they* (students) *write bad things if they do not like the lecturer* (Haizel)

This finding is in line with Hammonds, et al. (2017) who argues that student evaluation results may be affected by lecturer's leniency, reciprocity and the halo effect. If students have an overall bad impression about the lecturer, they will negatively evaluate the lecturer. If they have an overall good impression they will positively evaluate the lecturer.

Another reason for academics not valuing student evaluations is because of what students write on the evaluations:

> *The responses were not good in a sense that it's just a questionnaire we gonna* (sic) *lie and you know I got things like I like her hair, I like her eyes, I like the way she speaks. Which is not what you actually looking for. And when I asked the students they said mam we were just filling in these things, we did not know the seriousness of the questionnaire for us we are students. Then they said can we answer another one then I said no, you can't now. So students are not being serious* (Jane)
>
> *……. you see so students just fill in anything they tend to fill in anything just to complete and get it over and done with* (Brian).

These findings are in line with Douglas and Douglas (2006) who note that academics have little faith in student evaluation questionnaires and believe student evaluations do little for academics' future teaching performance (Deni et al. 2014). However, Mentz and Mentz (2006) argue that evaluations assist in improving academics' performance. In this study there is minimal evidence of student evaluations improving academics' performance as academics do not value student evaluations. The findings that students do not take seriously the task of evaluating teaching, contradict Brockx, et al. (2012, p. 1132) that "students seem to take their tasks as a commentator seriously" and they feel competent to evaluate the quality (Pavlina, et al. 2011).

Another reason why academics do not seem to value student evaluations is because of the perceived lack of maturity on the side of the students:

> *…….but you get some of the students who are there just to complete the questionnaires. Who are not very responsible and they don't seem to care. They are immature* (Jane)

These findings contradict Puŝka, et al. (2016) assertion that students are the best instruments to measure quality.

Another reason for not valuing student evaluations is explained by Brian as:

> *It* (the formal feedback) *is based on the actual lecture, but that is probably one aspect of quality of lecturing, I mean of quality of teaching. Because there are so many other aspects for example assessments and that sort of thing. But I think …, I mean … it (*the formal feedback*) only determines the quality of your teaching and not other aspects of teaching.*

There are some who see the value as well as the usefulness of the evaluations forms. This finding is in line with Cheng (2011) who found that academics perceive student evaluations as valuable. Celiwe argues that student evaluations are useful:

> *They do provide useful feedback regarding your teaching, for example comments last year were about consultation and assessments. They were also complaining that I do not return their assessments on time*.

Academics also mention that student evaluations can be useful in providing an opportunity for academics to learn from one another:

> *We can get ideas from each other. Sometimes students say I go too fast, and so maybe someone else might have obtained the same comment then we can share how she/he dealt with it* (Brian).

This view was also affirmed:

> *I think that if these SEQs and LEQs should go around. Not the entire campus but maybe just in your department when we have our departmental meeting. Let us share, it should be open, it should be open, it should be transparent. In doing that we can learn from each other* (Edith).

Although student evaluations are considered to be useful, there are concerns about the role of the institution and the Quality Unit in attending to issues identified by students on the evaluation forms:

> *In terms of giving me feedback yes they are effective because I am able to improve you know on my shortcomings as identified by the students. But in terms of the institution, I don't think they are useful they are not useful because we do those forms every year and we see no improvement on the areas identified by the students* (Fana)

Gilberto shares the same view:

> *Whatever is required from us, in many cases useless information. If the Quality Unit can be serious about quality as they are on paper. They should be doing a lot of*

things that they ask academic staff to do. Whatever the reason of the things that they do, I personally do not see the use for some of the things.

6.4.2 Providing feedback to students regarding what they wrote on the evaluation forms

Provision of feedback to students regarding what they write on the evaluation forms is reported as a quality practice. Haizel explains during the interview that after the students complete the evaluation forms, she writes a summary of all their comments:

> *After the second semester last year, I took the report you know what you receive from the Quality Unit and I wrote a summary of everything that they said on the SEQ then I wrote a little thing and I took it to the class and just read it out to them.*

Haizel further provides me with two written examples of summaries of the student comments she wrote after conducting the student evaluations. In these summaries she records the negative and the positive comments written by students and her own plans to work on the following year. This summary also contains her responses to the issues identified by students (Document H2 and H3). In one section she writes:

> *……I was told by one or two of you that I was short tempered when dealing with any trouble that might occur in class. I am not sure that I'm truly short tempered but I do accept that there were a number of occasions when there was some unpleasantness in class…..(*Document H3).

This indicates that the participant saw the need to defend herself against what the students wrote on the evaluation forms. This is contrary to what the institutional policy states, namely that students should be provided with feedback on the actions taken as a result of data gathered from subject and lecturer evaluation questionnaires (South African University of Technology, 2013a). This academic does not mention any changes to her teaching, after reading feedback obtained from student evaluations but mentions that she wrote a summary of the report and read the student comments back to them and further attempted to defend herself on what was raised by students regarding her temper. French et al. (2014) advocate that to improve quality, academics should reflect on the data they collect using student

evaluations in order to improve curricula, assessment and programme design. Student evaluations can be effective only if lecturers actually use the results and make changes to their courses (Hammonds, et al. 2017). One of the quality practices that can be implemented is that there should be the monitoring of student feedback and action and advice on the findings (Mammen, 2006).

6.4.3 Eliciting informal feedback

Thus far in this section I have discussed obtaining formal feedback using student evaluations and providing students with feedback regarding what they wrote on the evaluation forms. Academics further report obtaining informal feedback as a quality practice in teaching. It is reported that this type of feedback is obtained mainly through communicating with students verbally:

> Brian: ..... *but apart from evaluation questionnaires, I obtain verbal feedback as I am teaching. I do that like once a year. To sort of engage feedback as I am teaching.*
>
> ***Khethiwe: How do you obtain this feedback?***
>
> *Brian: By interacting with the students, they tend to give you verbal feedback and that helps* (Brian).

When asked if he documents this verbal feedback, as the institutional policy requires informal feedback to be recorded in a feedback log (South African University of Technology, 2013a), the response is:

> *That kind of feedback unfortunately it is not documented. Although this is not documented, but it is very useful* (Brian)

Obtaining informal feedback is also reported by other academics as follows:

> *I obtain verbal feedback from students regarding my lessons. I believe in getting responses outside pen and paper by talking to them* (students) *generally and asking what they think I should do differently* (Celiwe).
>
> *Also you know in the corridors, there are talks we talk. For example "this Mam taught us something that was way above our head so we don't understand". You get that feedback in the corridors or wherever the case maybe* (Edith).

The institution proposes other means of eliciting feedback which may include informal discussions. Furthermore, this practice of obtaining verbal informal feedback highlights the importance of effective communication between academics and students. At institutional level, the institution takes every interaction between a student and employee to be a process of providing education (South African University of Technology, 2007). Similarly Zerihun, et al. (2011) advise that feedback can be obtained during class time, during discussions after class and focus group discussions as means of improving quality.

6.5 Student support and monitoring practices

Findings further suggest that academics engage in student support and monitoring practices as quality practices in teaching. The practices are mainly academic support practices which include consulting with students and conducting tutorials. Practices related to monitoring students include monitoring student attendance of lectures. These are the last practices which are grouped as classroom and student related quality practices.

6.5.1 Consulting with students

For academics, consulting with students regarding the module content in addition to conducting formal lectures is regarded as a quality practice in teaching. Edith explains as follows:

> *But one of the ways I improve quality is by going the extra mile, just heeee* (hesitation) *over and above the classroom heeee (*hesitation). *I have a consultation period for students.*

Another academic discussed consultation in the study guide he provided:

> *Students are urged to take advantage of the consultation times to discuss with the Lecturer any issue related to their learning of the subject (*Document G1).

The data shows willingness to consult with students. The reasons provided for consulting with students are that:

> *I think students, especially first years they are afraid to speak up in the class. Then a lot of them after the lecture they will say Mam I do not understand….. But I cannot do the explaining in the classroom because there is another lecturer coming in. Then I say okay come to the class, I mean my office, let's discuss this. Then all of a sudden*

> *instead of that one person I've got eight or ten of them. So yes, that does in a way those consultations improve the quality for me* (Edith).

The institution encourages consultation and interaction between academics and students in addition to students attending formal lectures. Harvey and Williams (2010b) emphasise that there has to be contact between students and teachers as one of the ways of improving quality. The engagement and interaction between academics and students is particularly important in an institution that has a studentcentred philosophy. This is supported by Patsala and Kefalas (2016) who argue that a studentcentred approach to student support prioritises communication with students and students think they are a top priority to the academic staff. According to the 'Guidelines for Teaching and Learning' (South African University of Technology, n.d) the focus on first year students also will have long term positive implications for progression and throughput rates. In line with these views, the data indicate that some academics are approachable to students and have a caring and supportive attitude towards students who are struggling to understand in class. The quotation from Edith indicates that this academic makes it easy for students to come to her office after the lecture and she is available for consultation. She has an open-door policy (Patsala & Kefalas, 2016). These findings are contrary to Toni and Makura's (2015) finding that lecturers are seldom available for consultation. This was not the case in this study: consulting with students was reported to be taking place and was reported as a quality practice by academics.

6.5.2 Conducting tutorials

When academics report consulting with students as a practice related to student support, in addition they report conducting tutorials. Jane states that:

> ……*I also conduct tutorial workshops with them to try and increase the quality.*

During the interview, this academic explains that she conducts tutorials herself. She provides me with a tutorial page she uses during tutorial lessons (Document J1). This tutorial page contains solutions given to lecturers by publishers of the prescribed book. Jane statsd that she uses these questions and solutions in order to assist the students during tutorials. Furthermore on the day she gives me this tutorial page, she explains that during the tutorials which are scheduled on completion of each chapter, students are given extra questions to work on and

these questions are from the prescribed textbook. She further explains that she uses these solutions to *glance through the answers* written by students. Jane further mentioned that these tutorials are voluntary and are attended by those students who need them the most. The institutional policy documents, advocate the importance of lecturers engaging students in lectures, tutorials, seminars and group discussions (South African University of Technology, n.d). Maharaj (2012) asserts that students could be supported during tutorials, where students work in groups, challenge one another and have opportunities to ask questions.

6.5.3 Monitoring student attendance

The first two student support and monitoring practices discussed refer primarily to student support practices as quality practices in teaching. However, the academics also report monitoring students as a quality practice. Student attendance at lectures, in particular, is monitored. Gilberto, when asked to explain what he does in order to assure and enhance quality in his teaching, replies:

> *I can show you proof heee I think for the past two weeks, I have sent numerous memos to HoDs I service, to complain about poor attendance and non-attendance.*

The monitoring of student attendance seems to be in line with Mammen (2006) who explains that reports from academics to HoDs on student absenteeism is one of the quality strategies. Gilberto further explains that the reason he sends written correspondence to HoDs complaining about student attendance is that no one comes to check attendance. He goes on to elaborate:

> *This is for the past two weeks and we've got a test coming next week. And heeee* (hesitation) *so you have non-attendance or no show in the class on the other hand and on the other hand if you have less than 70 % pass rate you got to justify why.*

During the interview, this academic expresses his concern regarding the lack of focus on student attendance in the institution. He reports monitoring student attendance as a quality practice and further links student attendance to academic performance. The institutional policy documents are silent on monitoring student attendance and on the handling of student absenteeism. Student attendance and academic performance are in line with Pon's, (2014) assertion that pass rates of undergraduate students are directly related to student class attendance. Pass rates indicate student success which is linked to quality. During the

interview, Gilberto explains that pressure is put on academics to explain pass rates below 70%. He further explains that a reason for his practice of corresponding with HoDs complaining about non-attendance was that attendance is linked to performance. This finding of problems with non-attendance is in line with Hemer (2014) who found that there was difficulty in getting students to attend lectures and this has a direct impact on quality. In addition to Gilberto sharing this practice during the interview, the concentration on student attendance is also evident in the study guide he provided for the purposes of this study. On page three of the study guide he wrote:

> *Attendance is compulsory. Only students with an attendance record of 95 % or higher will be considered for passing the course (Document G2)*

This participant checks student attendance at lectures and regards this to be mandatory. Moore, Armstrong and Pearson (2008) note that the quality of a lecture can have an effect on student attendance. Furthermore there is a link between monitoring student attendance and quality as found in this study.

The student support and monitoring practices discussed in this section, indicate the acknowledgement by academics of their responsibility for supporting students in the institution. However there is also a view that there is nothing an academic can do if the students are not performing well in a subject:

> *Take for example, you have problems in class and there are students who do not understand your subject. What they* (the Quality Unit) *ask you is what have you done to help the students. There is nothing much that I can do as a lecturer except and apart from referring them* (the students) *to student services department* (Fana)

This academic seems to be distancing himself from the responsibility of supporting students and believes that this care work should be done only by S*tudent Services.* This view is not supported by Harvey and Williams (2010b) as they argue that lecturers need to be proficient in counselling skills as one of the ways of improving quality. The institution expects academics to be responsible for supporting students and to provide academic support and guidance (South African University of Technology, 2013b; South African University of Technology, 2007).

6.6 Conclusion

The Chapter presented, discussed and interpreted the data in order to answer the first research question posed in this study. Data reveals that academics have a wide range of quality practices (Dongwe, 2013). The practices are categorised using the quality practices framework developed in Chapter Four. The practices were further grouped into two broad categories of practices namely classroom and student related quality practices; and institutional and peer related quality practices. This Chapter presented classroom and student related quality practices. These practices included teaching and assessment practices as well as student feedback and student support practices.

In respect of teaching and assessment practices, academics follow institutional policy in providing explanations to students to make the disciplinary discourse accessible to students, preparing students for the workplace, developing materials and in designing online classes. However with regard to preparing students for the workplace, there is a view that this practice needs to be strengthened. The institutional policy documents are silent on making materials available to students. It is up to each academic to decide when and how learning materials should be made available to students. With regard to creating online classes, there are concerns regarding the introduction of online teaching, given the state of the institution and its students. Academics are also following institutional policy in contextualising and designing assessments. There is a view regarding the type of questions in assessments, however the institutional policy documents are silent on the ratio of the different question types in a question paper. Academics further report that they work with assessment results by analysing student results and analysing how each question is answered. Analysing how each question is answered is a practice initiated by academics but not stated in the institutional policy documents. There are tensions regarding the ten day deadline given to academics to mark assessments, send them for moderation and give back assignments to students. Academics find this to be a challenge given the number of students and the type of assessments to be marked.

Academics appear to follow institutional policy as they report that they are conducting student evaluations to obtain feedback from students. However there is some divergence from institutional policy in the frequency of administering student evaluations. The policies

regarding the provision of feedback to students, one the actions taken in response to students' evaluation forms, are not universally adhered to. One practice reported, is that of *reading their comments back to them.* There were different issues raised by academics regarding the administration of student evaluations and the responsibility for quality in the institution. Regarding the responsibility for quality in the institution, academics' views indicate that some prefer a top-down approach or top-down approach combined with a bottom-up approach and some would prefer quality issues to be decentralised to departments.

There is also the practice of obtaining informal feedback from students, however that informal feedback is not documented. However, the institution expects this type of feedback to be documented in a feedback log.

Consultation with students, particularly first years, and conducting tutorials are in line with institutional policy on student support and monitoring practices. However the monitoring of student attendance, reported in this study, is not articulated in the policies of the institution.

This chapter is the first of three 'results chapters' of this thesis. It has presented findings from interviews and documents concerning classroom and student related quality practices. Institutional and peer related quality practices in teaching are presented in Chapter Seven.

CHAPTER SEVEN: INSTITUTIONAL AND PEER RELATED QUALITY PRACTICES AS REPORTED BY ACADEMICS

7.1 Introduction

This Chapter is the second of the analysis chapters. Similarly to Chapter Six, chapter seven addresses the question of what practices academics report as quality practices in teaching and the relationship between these practices and institutional policy. Data generated in respect of this question was from the interviews and from documents provided by nine academics as indicated in Appendix H. The data were analysed as described under 6.1. The analyses gave rise to two broad groups of categories of quality practices in teaching which are firstly classrooms and student related quality practices, prioritised by academics. The second broad category of quality practices referred to institutional practices and those related to their academic peers.

Chapter Six presented and discussed the classroom and student related quality practices in teaching found in this study. This Chapter presents the institutional and peer related quality practices reported by academics. This is line with Figure 2 presented in Chapter Six. Institutional and peer related quality practices include what academics do outside the classroom to assure and enhance quality. This category includes professional development, annual quality monitoring, reviews and evaluations, peer evaluation, programme design and student enrolment practices. In sections 7.2 to 7.7, I discuss each of these practices.

The discussion will be similarly presented as in Chapter Six. After the practices are introduced, evidence from the data will be provided to illustrate the practice then the practice will be explained, discussed and compared to institutional policy. Each practice reported by academics will be concluded with a discussion of how it links or does not link to what has been written in the literature.

7.2 Professional development practices

Austin and Sorcinelli (2013) recognise a close relationship between staff support and development and quality. Academics who were participants in this study develop themselves and also participate in various initiatives related to staff development such as attending courses and workshops and working in teams. In respect of practices related to developing themselves they mentioned upgrading qualifications and writing reflective notes.

7.2.1 Attending courses and workshops

Academics report attending courses and workshops inside and outside of the institution as quality practices in which they engage. Albert alludes to this as follows:

> *But over the years, through different courses that I have attended for example tertiary education practice. You start to rethink your strategies for example rubrics…….*

The institution expects that academics attend seminars, workshops and conferences on teaching, learning and assessment (South African University of Technology, n.d). This academic highlights the attendance of a tertiary education practice course organised externally by another institution to assist willing academics to develop professionally as a quality practice. One of the ways of promoting professional learning amongst academics which can lead to improving quality is by attending seminars, courses and workshops. Deni, et al. (2014) state that to improve teaching, one needs to promote professional learning within communities of practice. Knowledge, skills and abilities of academic staff are vital to quality (Zaki & Rashidi, 2013).

Isaac reported attending courses and workshops as a quality practice with particular reference to attending an internal institutional induction programme. This induction programme is an institutional initiative for new staff members to assist them in understanding the institution and the expected practices. It is compulsory for all new staff to attend this programme. A central part of staff development directed at quality is induction of new staff (Ashcroft & Foreman-Peck, 1995).

During data collection, Isaac had just completed his induction sessions as a new academic in the institution. He explained during the interview that at the end of the induction programme, he was required to write and present a reflection paper on his last session of the induction programme. When asked to provide any document that represents how he assures and enhances quality in his teaching, he provided me with a copy of his induction reflection paper (Document I1).

Although having been to the institutional induction programme and having been employed by the institution for a year, Isaac explained that his view was that there were minimal discussions about quality in this institution. In his words:

> *Probably I would say for example some of your questions I could not answer because I have not been to any workshop on quality. The workshops are not there to acquaint everyone on quality.*

Isaac makes no mention of how the induction programme has assisted him to assure and enhance quality in his teaching. This academic seems to experience a disjuncture between what he learnt at induction and his practice. For example, in his induction reflection paper, the teaching philosophy he wrote was:

> *Tell me, I'll forget; Show me, I'll remember; Involve me, I'll understand* (Document I1).

However, during the interview he did not report any practices he implemented which relate to *involving* students as stated in this teaching philosophy that he adopted. He further indicated on this document that this teaching philosophy is based on the Chinese proverb. Moreover, Objective 4 of his reflection paper reads:

> *To conduct research related to my teaching, learning and assessment practice*
>
> *To attend seminars, workshops and conferences on teaching, learning and assessment in higher education* (Document I1)

During the interview, Isaac did not report any practice related to conducting research related to teaching, learning and assessment nor did he report attending workshops on teaching, learning and assessment in higher education. This finding is in line with Lebowitz, et al.

(2017) who posits that it can be difficult for academics to transition from the training room to their own classrooms with only the backing of generic staff development courses.

It is notable that in this study, academics did not identify any practices related to developing their teaching skills and how they develop knowledge of their profession. Furthermore there was no mention of how they develop their attributes as UoT academics. The findings reveal that there is less focus on courses and workshops related to teaching skills of academics in the institutional policy documents and from academics who were participants in this study. A study by Cardoso, et al. (2015) in Portugal found that most institutions do not have mechanisms for supporting teaching performance, even though teaching skills are an important component of quality.

Some of the academics, attending courses and workshops is in order to learn how to design online classrooms (using Blackboard). This is because of the institutional move to online learning and teaching as discussed in Chapter Four. The e-learning workshops reported to be attended by academics in this study, are intended to teach academics how to: design online classes, upload content, facilitate online discussions, conduct online assessments and use the various tools on Blackboard. Attending these workshops in designing online classroom is in line with the institutional expectations that academics be familiar with various aspects of e-learning (South African University of Technology, n.d).

However, one of the participants in this study, Gilberto, construed attending blackboard training to be a challenge to him, as he has to travel to another campus for the training. He stated that:

> *…….if you teaching, rushing to go to the other campus 89 km away. By the time you get there you going to be so tired - then you go and learn a new subject like Blackboard.*

Attending workshops on designing online classrooms was interpreted as a new subject which requires one to be fresh and alert. The practice of attending blackboard training workshops was reported by another academic (Jane). She stated during the interview that*: 'at the moment we are attending Blackboard training'*. Additionally, AQM report (Document C1) provided by Celiwe revealed that: '*the lecturer is undergoing training on Blackboard'*. Similarly Ocham and Okoth (2015) state that attending staff development programmes are classified as deliberate plans to improve quality.

7.2.2 Working in teams

Academics report working in teams as a quality practice. Higher education teaching involves teamwork especially if the same module is taught by different lecturers in the institution. Academics in this study explain that they have been able to '*maintain the momentum over the years'*. Albert describes this by stating that it easy to work when there are only two staff members involved in a particular module as compared to having many academic staff members in one module. Albert seems to associate quality in teaching with the number of academics working in a particular module, their ability to work as a team and their ability *to 'maintain the momentum over the years'*. This indicates how the academic team work can have an impact on quality in teaching.

Another academic reports:

> *We work as a team, so all of us provide our input to make sure that the standard is good* (Isaac).

Teamwork is emphasised at SAUT. Hence, the induction programme is aimed at enabling staff to work with others, respecting their dignity and the diversity in the institution (South African University of Technology, 2007). This reported practice of working in teams is hence in line with institutional policy. Similarly French et al. (2014) and Blanco-Ramirez and Berger (2014) encourage building teams and collegial experiences as one of the ways of improving quality and as important components in quality.

Although it is an institutional expectation that academics work in teams, there is a view that teams can stifle progress in a module as compared to when an academic is solely responsible for a module:

> *In a subject where I am the only person teaching, I am able to make my own decisions. In ……(*name of the subject*) I cannot make major decisions because I am not alone. We may talk about transformation this and that but the reality is that people are still using old ways* (Gilberto).

This academic links the lack of change in this particular module to lack of racial transformation and of hostility between colleagues. He further believes teams to have a negative impact on decision making. When probed to elaborate on the link between the

number of academics in a module and the ability to make decisions, Gilberto goes on to explain that:

> *See you got old people that are still setting the rules. They are set in their old ways. They would not drop the ball. They do not want to change*

This quotation indicates issues of power within the different teams with a lack of management of diversity within a team and a lack of willingness to change. This could indicate the lack of teamwork skills which have been identified by Austin and Sorcinelli (2013) as key strategic levers for ensuring quality. This quotation further indicates a lack of change in institutional cultures as identified by Mokhele, (2013) in that in the South African context, organisations have not changed since 1994. The lack of changes in institutional cultures could be because of previous racial tensions in the country. The institutional policy documents are silent on how teamwork skills are to be encouraged in the institution and how complications and tensions within teams are to be handled.

7.2.3 Upgrading qualifications

The study reveals that academics improve their qualifications by obtaining Masters and Doctoral qualifications. The upgrading of qualifications as a quality practice is evident in the following quote:

> *The trend now is that we actually quite competitive in that we are moving towards actually having further degrees. So quality in teaching is really on the uptake* (Edith).

The upgrading of qualifications is linked to improvement in quality by this academic. This upgrading of qualifications is in line with the value placed on staff qualifications by the institution (South African University of Technology, 2009c). Staff are continuously improving their qualifications (South African University of Technology, n.d; South African University of Technology, 2015). Hence the institution is in accord with the literature. One of the ways of trying to guarantee the quality in teaching is to have academics with PhDs (Sokoli & Koren, 2017). The linking of upgrading qualifications with quality is supported by Garwe (2012, p. 8) in that if the institution has more academics who are qualified with PhDs "there is a greater opportunity for imparting quality". Universities need academics who are

adequately qualified and who are motivated to work (Selesho, 2014) in order to enhance quality. The study further revealed that upgrading qualifications can have an impact on how an academic thinks about the module s/he is teaching:

> *…….when you teaching ……(*name of the module*) and you have studied that yourself, you have that meta conversation debate on your mind……..*(Haizel)

Harvey and Williams (2010b) mention that institutions rely on the capabilities and willingness of its employees to provide quality. The institution needs to guarantee that it has academics that are capable of teaching modules. One of the ways of demonstrating capability is through upgrading qualifications. According to Department of Higher Education and Training, (2015), the South African government has prioritised upgrading of qualifications as well as professional development of academics through initiatives such as the New Generation of Academics Programme (NGAP), the Existing Academics Capacity Enhancement Programme (EACEP) as well as the University Capacity Development Programme (UCDG).

7.2.4 Writing reflective notes

During two separate individual interviews, academics report writing their own reflective notes as a quality practice in teaching. They report that they write their own reflective notes in order to reflect on what has worked well and what did not work well in that particular year. The first participant who reports that he writes reflective notes does so after each lesson and then later converts them into yearly reflective notes:

> *Normally ……(*name of a colleague) *writes an overview. We write an overview and sit down at the end of October each year. What we will do after that in a constructive or as a proactive strategy, will then be to rewrite the course notes for the following year based on these reports* (Albert).

The writing of these reflective notes links to academics themselves evaluating and improving teaching. The writing of reflective notes after each lesson is not an expectation at institutional level. The two participants also explained during separate individual interviews that they initiated these reflective notes on their own. This resonates with Mentz and Mentz (2006)

who are of the view that educators should be self-reflective in order to improve quality. Additionally Korthagen and Vasalos (2010) as well as Biggs (2012) note that through reflection one can improve practice. Haizel explains during the interview how improving her qualification enabled her to conduct discourse analysis and reflect on her teaching by writing her own reflective notes.

An example of these reflective notes is provided by Haizel for document analysis purposes (Document H1). In this document, it becomes evident that these reflective notes were written in order to reflect on different matters pertaining to the module in addition to reflecting on the teaching materials. Killen (2010) suggests that reflection is a means of looking back at something and thinking about what happened and why it happened. This reflective note is different from the AQM report required by the institution as discussed in the next section.

7.3 Annual Quality Monitoring practices

Academics report writing Annual Quality Monitoring (AQM) reports as a quality practice in teaching. The writing of AQM reports is in line with institutional policy that individual academics are to compile AQM reports for each subject or module they have responsibility for in a given year (South African University of Technology, 2013a). Academics compile these reports to satisfy the requirements stated in the institutional policy. The AQM reports (Document B1 and Document C1) provided for the purposes of this study are in line with the institutional template of writing a module AQM report.

There is some variation regarding the awareness of this institutional expectation to compile AQM reports. Secondly there are contrasting views regarding the usefulness of compiling these reports.

The awareness regarding the AQM process

Brian indicates his awareness of the AQM requirement and provides me with an example of the AQM report (Document B1) which he compiled the previous year for his particular module. However another participant indicates a lack awareness of this institutional expectation:

> *For example there was a document called the AQM? AQM report? This was actually new to us…the AQM process is new to us we did not know about it, we only knew about it last year because we were preparing for the programme review then we compiled the reports after exams. We were supposed to have reports for three years* (Celiwe).

Although Celiwe articulates a lack of awareness during our interview, when I request that she provide me with a document which indicates her quality practice she gives me an AQM report (Document C1). This is an indication that although she only learnt about the AQM report requirement by 'accident', she considers it to be a quality practice.

I ask academics who did not report compiling AQM reports specifically about this process in order to ascertain their knowledge of this institutionally-mandated requirement. When one academic is asked during the interview to describe her experience of compiling AQM reports, she replies:

> *Actually I must admit I have never **(strong voice)** compiled any of that report. Don't forget maybe because of my contract status. I haven't been required to do it at all. Maybe the HoD, possible does it for the entire department, I am not too sure. On that perspective, I am not too sure* (Edith).

Another academic mentions lack of awareness as a reason for not having compiled the AQM report during a conversation with him:

> ***Khethiwe: Tell me about the AQM processes.***
>
> *Isaac: He, Eish*
>
> ***Khethiwe: The Annual Quality Monitoring?***
>
> *Isaac: I am not geared since I have just joined the institution. Some of these things I am not familiar with. Like the AQM process to be honest I am not familiar, I know there is such but as to what it entails I have no idea*

This conversation indicates that one of the reasons for not being aware of the AQM process '*I am not geared'* was that the staff member is new. Another academic (Jane) interestingly states verbally that she has heard about the AQM report requirement but indicates with her hands that she was not aware of this expectation. This could also mean that she has heard about the existence of the process, but knows nothing regarding what it entails.

Not only is there a lack of awareness regarding the AQM process, there is confusion between the different institutional processes as evident in the following conversation:

Khethiwe: Okay tell me about the AQM process. Those reports that are expected to be compiled by academics

(Participant breathes in deeply).

Haizel: *Well when we had our evaluation two years ago. What was a draft well at the time we did not have a programme co-ordinator. ……*(Name of the HoD) *believes we don't need one and the Quality Unit said we do, so I kind of done it and liaised with the other campus.*

Khethiwe: Done what?

Haizel: I kind of drafted the report, and it ended up being 'theee' report that was submitted.

The conversation with Haizel will also be used in section 7.4. In this section it indicates that Haizel is confusing the AQM report with the report that is submitted before the programme review '*when we had our evaluation two years ago…I kind of drafted the report and it ended up being theee report that was submitted'* which is the self-evaluation report. There is a link between these two documents. The AQM is a key document that contributes to the compilation of the self-evaluation report required for the six yearly programme reviews (South African University of Technology, 2013a).

A further confusion between the AQM process and other processes is evident in the following conversation:

Khethiwe: Tell me about the AQM process, the Annual Quality Monitoring process that was introduced by the Quality Unit in this institution in 2010

Gilberto: Okay, I assume you are talking about lecturer evaluation and subject evaluations

Khethiwe: No, this is something else but these evaluations you are referring to do feed into the AQM process, when you then reflect on them

Gilberto: Oh, you talking about the thing we do in the committee room where we bring lots of files?

Khethiwe: No, that is the programme review. We are going to talk about the other processes, let us start with the AQM. As an academic in this institution you are required to compile module reports at the end of each year or semester per module that you teach.

Gilberto: Okay I am not aware of it

These findings could indicate that there has not been sufficient 'advertising and marketing' initiatives about the AQM expectation to academics in this particular campus. I wanted to know exactly how academics go about writing these reports which is important in unpacking their understanding of the AQM process. These findings further indicate that some academics have never read the institutional policy documents related to quality and what is expected of them in terms of policy as this expectation is stated in the institutional policy documents related to quality. This further indicates a lack of, or ineffective, quality structures at departmental level to discuss institutional expectations related to quality.

Utility of the AQM reports

The institutional expectation of writing AQM reports evokes negative views from academics with regards to the usefulness of compiling AQM reports. Fana describes how he has learnt to play the game as he does not consider compiling these reports to be useful. He alludes to this as follows:

> *For example, this year I took last year's report and submitted it as it is because I do not see a point in submitting something new*.

Anderson (2006) alerts us to academics who consider quality expectations as games to be played. Similarly, game playing has been observed by Blackmore, (2004) with academics having learnt to play the game of policy makers rather than aiming to improve their teaching (Mkhize & Cassimjee, 2013). The data reveals that this academic has learnt to play the game of submitting the same report each year and is successful in playing this game as he further states that '*no one picked this up'*. This is not in accordance with institutional policy as academics are expected to write new reports each year. Academics need to report on the effectiveness of the changes implemented since the last AQM report (South African University of Technology, 2013a). Moreover, this academic questions *'the point in submitting'* these reports, obviously considering the practice of writing AQM reports to be ineffective. This finding is in line with that of Mertova and Webster (2009) in that academics question the intentions of the quality initiatives. Skolnik (2010, p. 14) found that academics are "confined to the onerous task of providing data to the assessment body" and they have no input in the design of the quality process. Such a noticeable lack of awareness articulated by

academics in this study as discussed on the previous page could indicate that they are not involved in the design of the AQM process.

The study further reveals that the practice of submitting AQM reports creates some expectations:

> *Because since I came here in 2008, I have always been doing these reports and I expect a follow up meeting with my HoD to address the issues I have raised in the report. This has never happened; I have never had a one on one interview* (Fana).

> *……. but even the Quality Unit guys. It's like you provide them with information then you get nothing from them. There is nothing that they do, in terms of attending to whatever that you have raised* (Fana).

The expectation from the institution for academics to compile AQM reports creates hopes that issues raised will be attended to. Academics get discouraged when this does not happen.

The policy documents are silent on how and when academics will be updated on developments regarding the issues they raised in the AQM reports they submitted. This finding is common to what was found by Jones and De Saram, (2005) in that academics are expected to submit annually but no feedback is given regarding the previous submission.

However in addition to these negative views regarding the AQM there are positive views. For Brian the positive view is that *this is an excellent process as a way of ensuring continuous improvement*.

Albert suggests that the AQM report together with the administration of student evaluation forms, *if well diarised on the institutional calendar can be very good systems* (Albert).

For Celiwe:

> *The AQM process is very useful because you ask yourself important questions for example why am I getting 60 % pass rate in this subject and 75 % pass rate in another subject? Which is what you desire actually. You also get a chance to re-evaluate your curriculum, you ask yourself if there is something missing in my teaching, assessments, the nature of the subject and your teaching. As a lecturer you tend to evaluate your subject.*

This quotation indicates that writing AQM reports provides opportunities for academics to ask important questions regarding what is working and what is not working in their particular modules.

In respect of the AQM process as well as the administration of student evaluations the study found that academics tend to see these processes as 'ritualistic' (Newton, 2002) with no visible impact on the quality in teaching. In some cases, they resist these processes. While some have negative attitudes towards these processes others have positive attitudes. These mixed findings concerning views about the AQM process are in line with O'Mahony and Garavan (2012) who found that quality systems evoke mixed reactions from academics.

7.4 Reviews and evaluations

Academics report practices related to preparing for and participating in programme reviews and evaluations as quality practices. As described in Chapter Four, internal programme reviews at SAUT take place every six years for each programme. Academics report engaging in practices such as preparing files for inspection, communicating in respect of the service teaching staff and the host programme specifically in preparation for reviews as well as writing self-evaluation reports.

7.4.1 Preparing files for inspection

Preparing files for inspection during programme reviews is described in a number of ways firstly as bringing files to a particular room secondly as preparing documents to be included in the files. Gilberto described the internal programme review process as:

> *That thing we do in that room where we bring lots of files.*

Programme reviews are further associated with preparing documentation that goes in the files according to Haizel:

> *They expect us to make copies of the students' scripts and the assignments …….. We spend hours in the photocopier doing this.*

This transcript indicates the expectation at institutional level regarding the documents to be included in the files. The institution expects that academics ensure that their module files are regularly updated and that module files contain items such as copies of all assessments (South African University of Technology, 2013a). Haizel describes preparing documents to be included in the files as requiring a lot of time. This finding is consistent with Cheng (2009) who maintains that there is tension between academics and audits because of the time required to prepare for the audits and because of the bureaucratic requirements. The Quality Unit at SAUT adopts a technical format of checking files during programme reviews, using a file checklist. Blackmore (2009) is of the view that evaluations conducted for accountability purposes focus on "tracking the paper trials". This seems to be the case in this institution.

7.4.2 Communicating between the service teaching staff and the host programme

Academics teach modules in their area of specialisation and even if their department is not the host of that particular programme. This is known as service teaching. Communication between staff offering service teaching and the host department they service is considered as a quality practice. However, according to one academic, improvement is needed in this area:

> *We also try to communicate as much as possible with the programmes that we service whenever we come up for reviews. That is still an area we need to improve. We come up for reviews perhaps somehow that is lacking* (Albert).

The institutional policy documents are silent on the guidelines to be followed with respect to liaison between host programme and service teaching academics. The service teaching arrangements with particular reference to frequency of communications are not articulated in the policy documents, however in this study it emerges as an issue affecting quality.

7.4.3 Writing self-evaluation reports

Academics report the writing self-evaluation reports as a quality practice. The institution expects that academics contribute to the compilation of self-evaluation reports (South African University of Technology, 2013a). These reports are to be submitted prior to the scheduled date of the internal programme review (South African University of Technology, 2013a).

As indicated under 7.2.4 a quality practice reported in this study is that of writing reflective reports. However those reflective reports are initiated by academics on their own and are different from this institutionally-mandated self-evaluation report. They are also different from the institutionally required AQM reports described under section 7.3.

Although academics write self-evaluation reports, they seem to confuse this with the AQM reports. The following conversation also appears under 7.3 as it relates to the writing of AQM reports:

> Haizel: *Well when we had our evaluation two years ago. What was a draft, well at the time we did not have a programme co-ordinator. ……*(Name of the HoD) *believes we don't need one* (programme co-ordinator) *and the Quality Unit said we do. So I kind of done it and liaised with the other campus.*
>
> ***Khethiwe: Done what?***
>
> *Haizel: I kind of drafted the report, and it ended up being 'theee'* (emphasis) *report that was submitted.*

This conversation has been reproduced because in this section it demonstrates that this academic did not anticipate that the report that she was writing informally would be '*theee'* one submitted to the Quality Unit prior to the internal programme review. This quotation further indicates confusion about whether staff offering only service teaching need to have a programme coordinator or not (with the HoD indicating that they don't need a programme coordinator and the Quality Unit indicating that they need one). According to this academic, there is uncertainty on who is supposed to write the self-evaluation report, when service teaching staff are being reviewed. The writing of self-evaluation reports in this case is not in line with institutional policy as Haizel wrote the report and it ended up being submitted. The institution requires that academics contribute to the writing of self-evaluation reports. The HoD and programme coordinators need to lead the writing of the report not ordinary academics as reported in this study.

The utility of internal programme reviews

Similarly to the AQM process discussed in section 7.3, academics express different views regarding the usefulness of the internal programme reviews in improving quality in teaching. Albert alludes to the matter as follows when describing internal programme reviews:

> *……..we wait for the big stick of the centralised quality assurer, then we start running around when there is a big stick coming for reviews, worrying whether we going to have heart attacks or nervous breakdowns or not. At the end of the day the improvement from that exercise is very minimal because you just happy it's over, you went through that and you did not have a heart attack.*

According to Albert, the review process is stressful. It is viewed as having the potential to have serious health implications. This academic views internal programme reviews to have minimal positive impact on teaching. This resonates with the findings of Rosa, et al (2012) who found that the impact of quality assurance systems is limited to academics unless it improves what they consider as the core functions of higher education. Wei-ping and Shuo (2010) support this finding that quality is not achieved through final inspection but through well-established routines. This finding in this study is also in line with Nobaho, Aguti and Oonyu (2016) who found that reviews are decoupled from teaching. Quality assurance has created a divide between the formal routines initiated to support quality and the daily practices in academia (Mårtensson, et al. 2014). This finding is also supported by Cheng (2014) in that academics do not find the exercise of quality evaluations beneficial to them and to their students. Moreover, it has been noted that some quality assurance procedures have the opposite effect to that intended (Biggs, 2001), being viewed as stressful, not useful and concentrating too much on files. The stress associated with programme reviews is also described by another academic. She refers to the process as '*necessary but stressful'* (Celiwe). The fact that this academic refers to internal programme reviews as *necessary* means that she understands these to be useful.

According to Gilberto, programme reviews are not useful:

> *We went through that thing in the committee room, I don't see any change. They always request this and that. We submit some documents; we don't submit all of them. It does not make any difference whether I submit or not.*

This problem of programme reviews being viewed as not beneficial was also observed in the 90s when Randle and Brady (1997) found in the UK context that academics regarded quality assurance measures as fruitless and irksome. The damage to quality was found to be because of the over-concentration on files and documents and little focus on the impact an academic has made on the student. The main problem found in this study is that these two processes (the internal programme reviews and the AQM process) are viewed by academics to have little benefit to academics and to quality in teaching and yet they are stated in the policy documents as quality expectations. Healey (2012) notes the prevailing tension between institutional needs and individual practices. Just as this study found, tension exists between academics and the quality processes. A study by Fillipakou (2011) also found that there is conflict between academics and quality managers.

These findings of the tension between teachers and policy makers are not exclusive to the higher education sector. It has also been found that educators in schools do not identify with the quality processes particularly with the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) process in South African schools (Biputh, 2008; De Clerq, 2008 & Hibbers, 2006) which is aimed at ensuring quality in the basic education sector.

Negative feelings regarding quality reviews have been found to be actually damaging quality in the institution (Blackmore, 2004). Another view regarding programme reviews is:

> *I do not think I am alone in saying that many of the ideas generated or the requirements of the Quality Unit especially in preparation for reviews is time consuming paper pushing filing. Time that could be better used more productively for students purposes* (Albert)

The perception of programme reviews being time consuming is also noted by academics who were participants in a study conducted by Jones and De Saram (2005) in Hong Kong and Lomas (2007), whose participants in the UK noted the emphasis on having the correct paperwork and managing quality processes rather than enhancing quality. Lomas further reports that academics are critical of quality initiatives because of the time required compiling statistics which could have been the time spent on research, reading and preparing teaching and learning materials. Blackmore (2004) asserts that quality assurance deflects academics away from time that could be spent on teaching and research. Academics apprehension about quality processes is related to its perceived impact (Cardoso, et al. 2013).

Similarly Cheng (2009) notes that academics see quality processes as paper chase exercises and simply paper work producing no real benefits for lecturers and students (Cheng, 2011) and as being outside of teaching (Sattar & Cooke, 2012). This finding is similar to what was found by Mhlanga (2008) in that academics see quality processes as something that will not add value to their practices. Hence the purpose of the programme reviews needs to be clear to all stakeholders in the institution especially academics.

Brian describes his concern about the '*administrative burden'* of these quality processes. This finding is similar to that of Jones and De Saram (2005) who note that the administrative demands of quality systems in a Hong Kong context could subvert the focus on quality in teaching. Cheng (2011) similarly found that academics in England view quality processes as burdensome. Academics associate quality with negative terms such as burden (Elassy, 2015). Additionally Selesho (2014) also notes that academics are over-burdened. Furthermore, it has been noted that quality processes are mostly management driven and do not take into account their human-centred aspects (Mertova & Webster, 2009). In the case of AQM, as well as preparing files for programme reviews, academics who were participants in this study seem to view these processes as one of the 'things to do' with no real benefit attached to them.

As found with respect to writing AQM reports, there is also an indication of distrust in the internal programme reviews, in that academics are able to 'play the system':

> *…….say they were to call out the subject files and I have just photo stated the cover page of the assignment or test and I haven't done the inside. Nobody will pick this up.* (Haizel).

The lack of trust in the institutional quality processes (internal programme reviews, the AQM process and the administration of student evaluations) is also expressed as:

> *And to me, going back to the jolly subject evaluations or programme evaluations. So often it's just a ticking boxes process* (Haizel)

7.5 Evaluating peers

Academics report peer evaluation practices as quality practices. Some practices are implemented while some of the practices are taken to be related to quality but they are not implemented. Academics describe moderating assessments as practices they were implementing. Practices regarded as quality practices but not implemented related to acting on the feedback from moderators, selecting moderators, observing teaching and using feedback from industry.

7.5.1 Moderating assessments

Moderation of student assessments is regarded as a quality practice. The practice appears to be well established:

> *Obviously we do the moderation of the tests* (Haizel).

Internal moderation is whereby peers monitor each other (Murdoch & Grobbelaar, 2004). Haizel's way of starting the sentence with *obviously* is an indication that this is a common practice in the institution.

Another academic alludes to this practice of moderation as a quality practice:

> *Okay first of all we have what we call internal quality check where amongst us internal staff, there is internal quality moderation of assessments as well as external moderation in exit level subjects. We kind of moderate each other's work and check the quality* (Celiwe).

Albert explains moderation as:

> *……. we've been able to in terms of quality; two staff members are able to keep 'check' on one another* (Albert).

This description of moderating assessments as to '*keep check on one another'* and to '*have a state of checks and balances in place'* is an indication that academics as peers can check what the other is doing based on a mutual agreement. Academics can also challenge and help each other, thus ensuring and enhancing quality.

Moderation of assessments is reflected in the institutional policy. The institution expects that there should be robust processes for internal and external moderation (South African University of Technology, 2013a). This is in line with Bloxham, et al (2015) in that the moderation of assessments is one of the quality approaches. These findings are similar to those of Tang and Hussin, (2013) when their participants noted that internal moderation allows for the lecturer to be able to understand the expectations of the university and the standards.

Academics in this study have different views regarding moderation in particular. They identify practices related to peer evaluation as mainly moderation of assessments,. Firstly, moderation was regarded as objective and secondly there was a question regarding what exactly is to be moderated. The objectivity of moderation was explained as:

> *External moderation is a quality issue because you get someone from outside to check your assessments and curriculum with an objective eye* (Celiwe).

In this quotation, moderation iss interpreted to be neutral and unbiased. The second view about moderation is a question regarding what is to be moderated? This is illustrated by this academic when she explains that:

> *……we don't tend to moderate the orals. We were planning to have a couple of orals as examples then we were planning to get a kind of a common standard for the orals. Haaa but it is interesting that ……..*(name of her colleague) *and I have worked together for so many years in such a way that we normally have that gut feel regarding the marks. We actually normally get similar marks* (Haizel).

The quotation above indicates that some assessments are moderated and some are not moderated according to this academic. Haizel goes on to elaborate that she thinks the Quality Unit will not be happy about the fact that they do not moderate the orals ('*they will have a fit'*). The institutional documents state that a representative sample of the students' work must be moderated (South African University of Technology, 2008).

7.5.2 Acting on the feedback from the moderators

Moderators assure quality of the assessments and thereafter provide feedback to academics regarding assessments. Academics consider obtaining and acting on the feedback from

moderators to be a quality practice. However the view is that feedback from moderators should be acted upon:

> *We obtain feedback from the moderator's report. We implement the suggestions but I feel this should be in more depth and we also take too long to act on the issues, sometimes the implementation takes longer, you cannot just jump and change from what you have been doing* (Celiwe).

The last quotation is an indication that academics obtain feedback from moderators during the moderation process as expected in the institution. However, there are issues regarding taking actions upon receipt of feedback from the moderators. The first issue is the time taken to act on the suggestions from moderators and second is the practicality of implementing the changes suggested by the moderator. The policy documents are silent on how feedback from moderators should be actioned.

7.5.3 Selecting moderators

Academics regard selecting moderators to be a quality practice. However, there is a concern regarding who is appointed as the moderator:

> *Then you are told that the moderator must come from the other campus and yet his students are not writing the exam at all. What is she/he going to moderate* (Gilberto).

Gilberto's assertion that '*then you are told that……'* could mean that he does not understand the selection criteria with reference to moderators. Therefore, according to this participant criteria for the selection of moderators are not clear to academics, except that the person should be from the other campus. These could be requirements such as his or her previous experience in assessing and moderating the different forms of assessments. The institutional policy documents state that moderators must have relevant qualifications and relevant experience (South African University of Technology, 2008) and the decision to appoint moderators rests with the Academic Department and is subject to approval by the relevant Faculty board (South African University of Technology, 2014). Gilberto further elaborates:

> *So there are more questions than answers. I might have one eye, but if you bring a blind person to lead me (*laughs).

7.5.4 Observing teaching

Academics regard observing teaching to be a quality practice. The view is that there is a need in the institution for checking what academics are doing in the classrooms:

> *It would be nice, where a template can be designed to check so that your teaching methods are assessed whether they are appropriate. Because I can go in and do my own thing and I am on my own* (in the classroom). *Who knows whether I am teaching the correct thing?* (Edith).

This quotation indicates a concern by this academic regarding the lack of institutional processes for checking academic performance in terms of teaching. She stated that she is not '*sure'* whether this is done or not. This quotation further indicates that this academic perceives a need for a robust process in peer observation of teaching. She suggests that this could be through the use of a *template* to evaluate teaching, which currently does not exist in the institution. This is different to what is happening at the Makere University in Uganda where Heads of Departments and Deans do the monitoring and supervision of teaching (Nobaho, Aguti & Oonyu, 2016) as one of the means of improving quality. Mammen (2006) advocates that HoDs regularly monitor the quality of academic activity in the department as one of the quality practices. Monitoring teaching by immediate supervisors can assist academics in developing their teaching skills and improving their teaching methods just as peer evaluation of teaching can enhance quality (Reisma & van Hamburg, 2013). However, the supervision of teaching has to be carefully introduced as it has been noted in the literature that some may find peer evaluation during teaching as an imposition in their classrooms (Harvey & Williams, 2010b).

7.5.5 Obtaining and using feedback from industry

Obtaining and using feedback from industry are quality practices according to academics. This refers to obtaining feedback from industry regarding the teaching taking place in the institution. Written feedback from supervisors in industry is reported to be obtained by means of using students' logbooks during WIL. Celiwe explains:

> *We read this* (feedback) *from logbooks but so far I would say as a department, we have a weakness. We lack a strategy of pulling those from the logbook and then develop an action plan in that we do not action the comments written by industry*

> *supervisors in the logbooks. So that is a weakness. Industry usually gives valuable feedback.*

The previous quote highlights the practice of obtaining feedback from industry by means of using logbooks but a weakness in not acting on that feedback. The suggestion is:

> *we need to use feedback from industry to improve the quality of our teaching. We need to look at the comments from industry in our logbook. Some of them give valuable input regarding what our students are lacking. For example, we were told that our students need knowledge of using spread sheets and this is not currently in our computer literacy programme* (Celiwe).

This practice is expected at institutional level, in that feedback should be obtained from various stakeholders including employers (South African University of Technology, 2013a). Obtaining feedback from stakeholders such as employers serves to ascertain whether the curriculum is in line with the needs of the employers. The institutional policy documents are not explicit on how feedback from industry should be used to enhance quality.

7.6 Designing programmes

As discussed in Chapter Four, the Curriculum Renewal Project was initiated at SAUT, in order to move away from old technikon practices (see Chapter Four) and encourage ownership of programme design and curriculum design within the institution. Academics report engaging in practices related to programme design, and they consider these as quality practices. Programme design and curriculum design is a key focus area for quality (Geyser, 2004b; Zaki & Rasidi, 2013).

The practices reported by academics include participating in the institutional Curriculum Renewal Project, identifying the needs of the various stakeholders, choosing content and ensuring coherence between the module and the programme.

7.6.1 Participating in the institutional Curriculum Renewal Project

Academics report participating in the institutional Curriculum Renewal Project as a quality practice. Albert at the beginning of the interview takes time explaining to me the changes that

will be taking place in his particular module as a result of the Curriculum Renewal Project. He states that:

> ……*and with the new curriculum eeeehhhh* (hesitation), *I think 80 % of* ……*(*name of his module*) will be in General Education and it will be an elective.*

This is an indication that the Curriculum Renewal Project, brought about changes and even brought about the introduction of General Education modules in the institution. Albert links this to quality and explains that he has been involved in developing modules which will be offered at the request of the programmes:

> *I have also developed another course, also a semester course eight credits called* ……(name of the module) *which is similar to* ……(name of the old module*). It's for the institution* (Albert).

This is an indication that this academic has been involved in designing and developing the curriculum for a particular module which is to be offered institution-wide on a semester basis. This is in line with the proposal of the institutional Curriculum Renewal Project in that it proposes a shift at institutional level from subjects to modules (South African University of Technology, 2010). The participation of academics in developing the curriculum is in line with Harvey and William (2010b) who consider this practice to be linked to quality.

The view is that this institutional Curriculum Renewal Project has been inclusive and has assisted in relooking at the content:

> ……*they really tried to involve everyone in the Curriculum Renewal Project. As you know, in this faculty we were ready to go ahead with the new programmes next year but now it is going to be the following year. They have really tried to make everyone involved there. This has made people to look critically at their content of their subjects* (Haizel).

This view regarding participation of academics in the Curriculum Renewal Project is an indication that academics view the curriculum renewal process in a positive light. This finding contradicts what Mkhize (2014) notes about curriculum development being experienced negatively by most academics. This is not the case in this study. Albert, understands the curriculum renewal process to bring new changes and new ways of teaching whilst at the same time producing re-designed courses.

7.6.2 Identifying the needs of stakeholders particularly employers

Academics report identifying the needs of various stakeholders such as employers to inform programme design as a quality practice:

> *Knowing what the industry wants you know is very important because they are our customers. We do it* (identifying the needs) *but I feel there must be more emphasis. It must be a more regular thing* (Celiwe).

The institution requires that programmes must meet the needs of all stakeholders including professional bodies (South African University of Technology, n.d, South African University of Technology, 2013a). This view is shared by Kettis, et al. (2013) as well as Senthilkumar and Arulraj (2011) as they claim that it is important for institutions to interact closely with employers as one of the means of enhancing quality. Geyser (2004b) also argues that if the programme is not properly planned it will fail to meet the needs of the stakeholders such as students and employers (Geyser, 2004b). The management of quality rests with all parties (Basit, et al. 2015). The above quotation further acknowledges the importance of customer satisfaction in higher education. In this instance, the customers are described as employers.

7.6.3 Choosing content

In line with identifying the needs of the stakeholders, findings further reveal that, academics identify practices related to choosing content as quality practices in teaching. Choosing content according to Isaac is when he '*looks'* to his professional body to ascertain what he is required to teach in terms of content. He further stated that the professional body in his discipline determines what content must be taught. According to this academic, the professional body prescribes the textbook to be used in the module.

This practice of choosing content in line with professional body requirements is congruent with the institutional expectations that the programme should be in line with both legal requirements relevant professional bodies (South African University of Technology, n.d). This finding is supported by Ballim, et al. (2014) as they note that professional bodies have

control of the curriculum as well as of teaching and learning in universities and they consider this to be an issue of quality.

In addition to meeting professional body requirements, when choosing content, another practice related to choosing the content to teach, is:

> *I check with the other universities regarding what they assess, what their content is* (Isaac)

According to this academic, checking with other universities is to ascertain to what extent the module can be compared to what is taught in a similar module in other institutions, thus aiming for some level of uniformity across institutions. Checking other institutions for content is explained as:

> *Okay because they* (the modules) *are such a theoretical, we have a textbook that we lecture from. So, my preparation of the lecture will be to do more research internet base, look at what other universities are teaching content wise you know, what topics and then I just disseminate this information to my students* (Jane).

This quotation indicates the practices of first preparing for a lecture and then deciding on what content to teach by means of attempting to be in line with what other institutions are teaching. It involves referring to other universities and checking the internet to ascertain the content they teach in those institutions. This is then followed by '*disseminating the information'* to students. Although the institution is not explicit on how academics should choose content, at SAUT, this practice of choosing content refers to the importance of academics having exceptional knowledge of the subject matter (South African University of Technology, 2013b).

7.6.4 Ensuring coherence between the modules and the programme

Another practice relates to ensuring that there is coherence between the programme and the modules offered in the programme:

> *Also from an institutional point of view, it is very important to know what our lecturers are doing out there in terms of the subjects. Does this subject hold any water? Are students interested in this subject? Can we not introduce something that is*

> *more relevant? ……*(name of the subject) *what does it have to do with……..*(name of the programme) (Edith).

This quotation refers to how each programme is designed, which modules are offered in each programme and whether these modules are congruent with the actual programme. This academic puts forward the importance of the institution having knowledge of what academics are teaching in each module. Coherence is also an expectation stated in the institutional policy documents, in that there must be coherence between the modules and the programme when designing the programme (South African University of Technology, 2013a).

7.7 Student enrolment practices

Academics report practices related to selecting and enrolling students as quality practices, in line with Zaki and Rashidi (2013) who argue that the profile of students can influence quality. It is thus not surprising that academics link practices relating to selecting and enrolling students to quality. Isaac alludes to this:

> *…..based on our selection criteria we select the cream of the crop, the best students that meet our entrance requirements…….*

This academic appears to have been involved in selecting and enrolling students. He is therefore familiar with the entrance requirements of his particular programme and selects students who on meet specific criteria. This practice is in line with the institutional policy documents in that the responsibility of selecting and enrolling students rests on academics (South African University of Technology, 2009b). The institution further expects that the admission system should be fair, simple, explicit and transparent (South African University of Technology, 2009b) and that the selection criteria should be clear (South African University of Technology, 2013a). Essack, Wedekind and Naidoo, (2012) assert that different institutions have put in place strategies relating to selecting and admitting students and they further link this to quality and so does (Garwe (2012) who sees that the way in which students are selected, can have an impact on quality.

The advantage of applying selection criteria when enrolling students is described as:

> *Therefore the quality that we give them is something that they are able to accommodate as well* (Isaac).

This quotation indicates that this academic believes that when there is careful screening and proper selection of students before registration, students are able to keep up '*they are able to accommodate'* and are more likely to succeed. Isaac holds a positive view about students who are registered at SAUT and also has high expectations of the students. This view is supported by Skolnik (2010) in that academics have the power to emphasise admissions selectivity, but cautions that those who favour admissions selectivity have an elitist view of higher education. However, Akoojee and Nkomo (2007) state that quality in higher education should be understood in the context of redress, equity and access. Therefore there is tension between applying strict entrance requirements and increasing access to higher education. As Akalu (2016) notes, in an Ethiopian context, there are complaints regarding reduced autonomy for academic departments to select students. There, the Minister of Education selects students so academics have lost their professional autonomy to select their own students. This is not the case at SAUT where academics select students using strict selection criteria.

In addition to reporting the practice of selecting students and holding a positive view about using specific criteria to select students, there are negative views regarding students who are registered at SAUT. The first negative view is about the type of students:

> *… I think we need to look at our recruitment strategy. The type of students we attract in this institution are not academic material and are not university material. If we continue to attract people who have been rejected by traditional universities they come here and they create huge problems for us. It seems that we are dealing with rejects from traditional universities* (Fana).

> *In my experience the students are really not university material. I am saying this especially as a language lecturer I see the quality of the students we are getting in terms of their language. They (*students*) are definitely not university material* (Gilberto).

Biggs (2010) branded teachers who usually focus on the negative and who always believe they deserve better student to work with as 'toxic teachers'. Furthermore this approach has been named as the 'blame the student theory of teaching' (Biggs, 2012).

The second negative view around selection is about the emphasis on numbers:

> *…..most of the time it's more about putting bums on seats* (Haizel).

According to this academic, the institution prioritises the filling up of the classrooms, rather than selecting the best students. The same participant (Haizel) further indicates by writing in her own reflective report that:

> *It was to become clear and as never before that some of the students should not have been successful in gaining entrance to university* (Document H1).

The third negative view is about the level of responsibility on the side of the students. Gilberto articulates that:

> *students receive their notes for my course but after a couple of months, they have no idea where the notes are ……..*

This academic indicates a lack of responsibility and commitment on the side of the students which can impact negatively on quality. This can cause delays during a lecture as students move around to find someone to share notes with or the academic spends time looking for extra sets of notes to give to students again. Another academic links this lack of responsibility to purchasing textbooks:

> *Also the fact that our students do not see it as important to buy prescribed textbooks does have an impact on quality* (Fana).

These quotations talk to how higher education students and their levels of responsibility together with how they prioritise their needs can be linked to quality. Akalu (2016) also found that according to academics in an Ethiopian context, students do not prioritise purchasing of textbooks and academics consider this as one of the quality concerns. However, Steyn, et al. (2014) are of the view that universities can extend support to students by adopting policies that allow study materials to be purchased at reduced or wholesale prices.

7.8 Conclusion

Chapter Six presented practices which according to academics were a priority. Those practices are categorised as classroom and student related quality practices in teaching. This chapter presented and discussed the second category of practices found in the study which are classified as institutional and peer related quality practices. The two sets of practices are not mutually exclusive: they can overlap. Academics' prioritising of classroom and student related quality practices is a striking finding because the most discussed practices in the institutional policy documents refer to programme design practices. These findings indicate that academics in this study, link quality mostly to what is happening in the classroom, whereas the institution links quality to what happens outside the classroom.

In summarising the institutional and peer related quality practices discussed in this chapter with regards to professional development practices, data shows that academics consider attending courses and workshops, working in teams, upgrading qualifications and writing reflective notes as quality practices. Attending courses such as an induction programme in the institution is in line with institutional policy; however there seems to be a call for deeper engagements about quality issues in this induction programme for newly appointed staff. The writing of reflective notes after each lesson is initiated by academics on their own in order to upgrade their teaching materials for the following year. This practice is not stated in the institutional policy documents.

In respect of AQM practices, the study found that academics are writing AQM reports as per institutional policy, however there was a practice of submitting the same report each year, which is not in line with institutional policy. Furthermore it is of concern to learn that some who write the AQM reports do not see any value in writing these reports and academics lack awareness regarding this institutional expectation. There is also a perception that contract staff are not expected to compile AQM reports, which is a divergent from institutional policy.

With regards to reviews and evaluation practices, there is minimal regular updating of module files as per institutional policy, academics '*wait for the big stick then run around'* (Albert). Some academics feel stressed by the expectation to prepare files and to prepare documentation that goes into files. They do not see any link between this practice and quality in teaching. They view internal programme reviews to be time consuming, paper pushing,

ticking boxes and an administrative burden. There is also an indication of distrust in these processes. With respect to writing self-evaluation reports, it emerges that sometimes academics write the self-evaluation reports themselves in preparation for internal programme reviews and yet the institutional policy states that they need to '*contribute'* to the writing of the report. There is also of a need to strengthen relations between host departments and those who are from another department who provide service teaching to the host department.

Academics report peer evaluation practices which they are implementing as well as peer evaluation practices which they regard as important to quality but they are not implementing. They report moderation of assessments which is in line with institutional policy, however there are concerns regarding acting on the recommendations from the moderator. The institutional policy documents are silent on the timelines for acting on the recommendations proposed by the moderators and the identity of those responsible for ensuring that those recommendations are actioned. There is also a concern regarding the selection of moderators. The policy documents do not stipulate the assessment experience expected for one to be appointed as the moderator. The practice of HoDs observing teaching using a particular evaluation form is regarded as important in this study, however the institution is silent on this practice. The policy documents do not make provision for HoDs to sit in the classrooms and evaluate teaching performance. Academics further regard acting on the feedback from industry (obtained from logbooks) as important, but it is said that this is currently not done.

The study further reveals that the internal quality processes such a programme reviews, compiling of AQM reports and conducting student evaluations evoke mixed reactions from academics. Furthermore academics report minimal to no improvement on quality in teaching as a result of these processes.

With regard to programme design practices, the study found that the institutional Curriculum Renewal Project is embraced by academics through their practices as they reported revising some of the modules and developing new modules in line with the Curriculum Renewal Project. Academics further report that they are choosing content as one of the practices. The way they were choosing content reflects professional body requirements, where applicable, as expected in the institutional policy documents. Others report choosing content by checking what other universities were teaching. The institution is silent on this.

The study reveals that the selection and enrolment of students rests on academics as per institutional policy, as it is reported that students are selected using selection criteria.

However, there are mixed views regarding the type of students in the institution, with naming of students as '*cream of the crop'* and '*rejects'* emanating from the data.

The findings in these first two analysis chapters reveal that the relationship between policy and practice is variable. In some cases academics follow what is stated in the institutional policy and in other cases they report their own practices which are not stated in the policy. In addition, although some academics follow the institutional policy, there are variations to policy implementation as well as some evidence of 'game playing'.

Answers to the first two research questions which ask what academics report as quality practices in teaching and what the relationship between the practices reported by academics and institutional policy is, have been presented in these first two analysis chapters. Furthermore, having linked the reported quality practices and views of academics to what has been written in the literature, the next chapter (Chapter Eight) will provide answers to the third research question on what academics understand quality to mean (conceptions). Chapter Eight will also present the explanations provided on what, according to academics, can have an impact on quality in teaching, together with presenting explanations for why they implement the practices they report to be implementing.

CHAPTER EIGHT: ACADEMICS' CONCEPTIONS OF QUALITY, EXPLANATIONS FOR WHAT AFFECTS QUALITY IN TEACHING AND EXPLANATIONS FOR THE PRACTICES

8.1 Introduction

The study reveals that quality practices are mainly informed by institutional policy and at times are initiated by academics on their own as described in Chapters Six and Seven. In some cases, the policies are implemented according to institutional policy while in some cases there are variations when it comes to implementation. Furthermore, academics prioritise classroom and student support practices over to institutional and peer related practices.

Chapter Six and Seven further reveal tension between academics and some institutional quality processes such as administering student evaluations, writing AQM reports and participating in reviews and evaluations. Some academics saw no link between some institutional processes and improvement in quality in teaching. The analysis of the practices further reveal that there are practices academics implement and there are practices they regard to be important but they are not implementing. In some cases, there is a link between the practices they regard as quality practices with the practices they report to be implementing and in some cases these are not congruent.

This chapter, the last of the three analysis chapters, addresses the question of how academics conceptualise quality and what they consider is affecting quality in teaching. To answer these questions, data were obtained from interviews with the above mentioned nine academics. Data were first analysed by reading the transcripts to identify conceptions of quality referred to by academics across the different interviews. Qualitative data analysis of interview transcripts was performed meticulously to extract the conceptions of quality held by academics and to categorise these conceptions. The categorisation was in order to ascertain whether the conceptualisations of quality by academics were consistent (Watty, 2002) with how quality has been conceptualised at national level, institutional level as well as in the literature reviewed in this study. This analysis led to identifying various conceptions of

quality held by academics. Conceptions of quality articulated by academics were listed then categorised into the five conceptions of quality as described in Chapter Two. Similar conceptions were grouped together.

Second, data was analysed to identify what according to academics, are enablers of and impeders of quality in teaching with an intention of proposing recommendations on ways of overcoming impeders. Third, the reasons why academics implement the practices they reported to be implementing were identified.

It is evident that academics understood quality to mean different things. Furthermore, academics also provided various explanations regarding what they viewed as impacting on quality in teaching. Academics further provided various explanations for implementing the practices they reported to be implementing. Hence in this chapter:

- The first part introduces the different conceptions of the notion of quality as articulated by academics during the individual interviews.
- The second part presents academics' explanations on what affects quality in teaching and on why they implement the practices they report to be implementing.

The focus on how academics conceptualise quality is because the literature reviewed, (in Chapter Two), reveals that there is a paucity of what has been written about how academics conceptualise quality especially in the South African UoT context. It is important therefore to ascertain academics' conceptions of quality using qualitative research, in order to obtain an in depth understanding, given the uniqueness of a University of Technology. Kleijnen, et al. (2013, p. 161) advocate that:

> *Further qualitative studies are needed to investigate conceptions of quality and organisational values more in-depth for example by conducting interviews with teachers.*

This view is corroborated by Elassy (2015) who states that studying quality definitions should be conducted by researchers from different backgrounds to increase understanding of it from different angles. Another reason for focusing on how academics conceptualise quality, is because of the data revealing tension between academics and some quality processes as discussed in Chapters Six and Seven. According to Watty (2002) and Kleijnen, et al. (2013) the conflict between academics and quality systems could be because of the conflict in

conceptions, interests and priorities held by the different stakeholders. Against this backdrop, it is therefore important to understand what academics think is quality (Kalayci, et al. 2012; Kleijnen, et al. 2013).

Table 9 is a synthesis of how quality is conceptualised at national level and how quality is conceptualised at institutional level, using the five conceptions of quality (Harvey & Green, 1993) discussed in Chapter Two. The five conceptions are used as an analytical framework in discussions around stakeholder conceptions of quality (Watty, 2006).

	Quality as exceptional	**Quality as perfection**	**Quality as fitness for purpose**	**Quality as value for money**	**Quality as transformation**
National level			√	√	√
Institutional level			√	√	√
Academics	?	?	?	?	?

Table 9 Quality conceptualisations at national and institutional levels

The table shows that, according to the policies reviewed in this study, there is minimal focus on quality as exceptional at the national and institutional levels. Quality as exceptional refers to quality as appearance, teaching facilities, resources and the image of the institution. The table also shows that both at national and institutional levels, the notion of quality as perfection has not been fully adopted. This notion refers to quality as error free and near perfect. However there is some reference to quality as compliance at national level, which is in line with quality as perfection.

Table 9 further shows that in the national and institutional documents reviewed, there is a notion of quality as fitness for purpose which relates to quality as based on the mission, vision and objectives of the institution. A notion of quality as value for money is evident in the national and institutional policy documents which refer to quality as return on investment and quality as satisfying the needs of the customers. As evident in Table 9, the national and institutional policy documents reveal a conception of quality as transformation. These

policies mainly refer to quality as improvement and development, quality as student success, quality as equity of access and quality as social redress.

It is thus essential to ascertain whether the conceptions of quality held by academics are in line with the conceptions noted in the literature, in national policy documents and in the institutional policy documents. This is important because the meanings associated with the concept could have an effect on the practices regarded as important and thus implemented. "Quality depends on what one takes quality to be" (Maguire & Gibbs, 2013, p. 45).

8.2 Academics' conceptions of quality

During data generation, I did not provide a definition of quality to the participants. The study anticipated finding academics' conceptions of quality from their voices. "Finding the time for academics to reflect on what quality in higher education means is often difficult but it is very important nonetheless" (Kayalci, et al. 2012, p. 165). Not providing participants with a definition of quality did allow me to understand what academics regarded as quality without having influenced their thinking. Participants articulated their own understanding of quality in their own words during individual interviews. This research reveals that quality is conceptualised by academics in four ways:
First, there are conceptions of quality which relate to quality as transformation. The second group of conceptions relate to quality as exceptional. Conceptions of quality as value for money are the third group and the fourth group of conceptions is that of quality as fitness for purpose. There are also some overlaps within the conceptions as some conceptions can fit in more than one category. I now move on to discussing the four conceptions of quality reported by academics in this study.

8.2.1 Quality as transformation

The first group of conceptions academics report belong to the notion of quality as transformation. The data shows that participants think that this conception refers to the transformation of academics and students as individuals through their encounter with the higher education sector. With particular reference to quality as transforming students, for Celiwe, it is about how the institution changes students as individuals:

> *I think it's starts with understanding the heee* (hesitation*) what is it, the graduate attributes. In other words, the end product the person we are grooming. This should start from lecturers, HoD and the QPO. Lecturers need to practice quality every day for the institution to be serious about quality. Whenever we teach, we need to know that we are teaching this because at the end of the day this is the person we want to groom.*

The quotation above indicates that this participant views quality to be about people in the institution. According to this academic, quality is about changing the individual, empowering the individual (in this case the student who is '*the person we want to groom'*). This finding is in line with Nabaho, et al. (2016) who argue that quality as transformation is based on transformation of the student in terms of their knowledge, skills and personal attributes and transformation is the objective of teaching and the fundamental purpose of higher education. It is about the before and after of a student.

For Albert too, quality is about developing graduate attributes and impacting the life of a student:

> *Quality does not exist in a document somewhere; quality exists in the classroom. Quality ultimately what we should be looking for, we should be looking for are those attributes of our graduates. What are students taking away from the institution? They are not taking away with them how a lecturer kept well his/her subject file. They are taking with them 15 years later at the airport and say yes!! my lecturer!!!! I remember you because……*(silence) *the impact you have made in their lives.*

The transcript above refers to quality within the context of the classroom. Quality is seen to be about doing something to the student (Watty, 2002). This is because quality as transformation is sympathetic to the pedagogic process of higher education (Pitman, 2014). Quality as transformation, according to this academic, is about what students take with them from their lecturers, how they have developed and been affected by the teaching and learning experienced. It is about the reform and change of a student. Albert compares his conception of quality to what the institution expects 'lecturers keeping subject files' as discussed under 7.4.1) and explains that he does not see the link between the two. This finding is consistent with Lomas (2007) who found that academics felt there was a lot of emphasis on paper work (in UK universities) rather than enhancing quality. Furthermore, this tension between conceptions of quality and institutional quality mechanisms is noted by Anderson (2006) who also found that these are incompatible. Furthermore, this finding is in line with Lim (2001), who is of the opinion that quality is the ability to transform students on an ongoing basis and

to add value to their knowledge and personal development. Academics in this study understand quality to concentrate on human beings, to concentrate on grooming and impacting one another. In support of this, Essack (2012) is of the opinion that there is a need to focus on the impact of teaching.

According to the academics, quality as transformation is not about students only; it is also about empowering these academics. This can be noted in Celiwe's previous quote that this "should start from lecturers*"*. Gvaramadze, (2008) states that quality is about changing perceptions and worldviews of individuals. Edith's focus on academics as qualified professionals, as teachers and as researchers is another indication of the notion of quality as transformation:

> *….so by publishing more by studying further it actually improves the level of quality and the output to the students. We improve what we can basically offer the students.*

According to this academic quality is not only about the student being '*groomed'*. It is also about staff developing themselves academically as identified in Chapter Seven. Furthermore, when Edith was asked to comment on quality with particular reference to teaching in the institution, she replies:

> *I would say that quality of teaching in this institution, I think it is of a satisfactory level. Satisfactory level why because I believe that a lot of our academics are heee* (hesitation) *have achieved higher degrees such as BTech, sorry MTech. They are well qualified. I am saying this because now I see there is a trend; academics are a lot more interested in pursuing post graduate qualifications for example Masters and PhDs.*

In addition to quality being understood to mean academics' publications and upgrading qualifications, there is also an indication of the notion of quality *'the personality of the teachers and teaching strategies'* as identified by Albert. This includes the personality traits and behaviour of an academic as an individual as well as his or her teaching approaches as these have the potential to transform the student. Linking teaching strategies to quality is an indication that there is a link between conceptions of quality held by academics and quality practices.

Quality as transformation could also mean the individual:

> *I hope I have given you useful information, because I am not into quality I am not a quality person (*Fana*)*

This academic identifies quality to be about somebody, a person, a position a person holds within the institution. According to him, that person or position is not him. He is distancing himself from issues of quality. This finding is in line with Cardoso, et al. (2013) who found that male academics identify less with quality than do their female counterparts.

8.2.2 Quality as exceptional

The second conception of quality identified by academics is that of quality as exceptional. This refers to how the institution is viewed by external stakeholders. Quality as exceptional refers to the teaching facilities available in the institution. In respect of how quality of the institution is viewed by external stakeholders, one academic, when asked to explain his own understanding of quality in higher education, replies:

> Isaac: *That is always a difficult question to answer (*laughs*), but for me quality is offering qualifications which are relevant and in line with what other universities are teaching and eehh* (hesitation) *which is in line with what the industry expects*
>
> ***Khethiwe: Okay***
>
> *Isaac: So, using the best practices which are available* (Isaac).

This academic understands quality to mean relevance of the qualifications offered by the institution and the extent to which these qualifications meet industry expectations. This conception indicates a desire to meet external stakeholder expectations by linking programmes offered by institutions to industry expectations. Doing this enhances the image of the institution and its credibility. Aligning qualifications to '*what the industry expects'* is keeping in line with the identity of a University of Technology whose role is to deliver appropriately qualified work ready graduates to employers (Du Prè, 2010). This finding is similar to that of Cheng (2014) that quality can equate to the university brand. In addition to identifying industry stakeholders as external stakeholders, this academic further categorises higher education institutions as external stakeholders when considering quality in teaching:

'*what is in line with other universities'.* This academic understood quality as offering qualifications which are comparable to what is offered by other institutions, which is important for articulation purposes. Mkhize (2014) agrees with this statement in that the curriculum should be in line with what other universities are offering. Furthermore, there is an indication that this academic understands the importance of focusing on the efforts adopted in providing quality (*best practices).*

Another academic, reports a conception of quality as exceptional in this manner:

> *When I see that quality has come through is when I have 100 % placements for experiential learning. For me that is quality. That is quality because what does it say? It means you have done a good job at placing student, because it is very difficult these days. We are competing with FETs. They place students for 18 months and yet we need to place ours for four to six months (*Edith*).*

The idea is that placements of students can be indicators of quality in teaching and learning. It is related to how the industry (as external stakeholders) perceives the students coming from a particular institution. When all the students are placed, according to this academic, this is quality. Being able to place students for WIL refers to the reputation of the institution, which is in line with quality as exceptional. According to Edith, if industry holds a negative perception about the institution and its students those students will not be accepted in that industry. However, if industry holds positive perceptions about the institution and the students it accepts students, despite the competition with students from other institutions. These findings match those of Shanahan and Gerber (2004) that academics view quality as different stakeholders appreciating the intrinsic goodness of the institution. In this case one of those stakeholders is the industry. Kettis, et al. (2013) argue that currently placements are an under-used vehicle for quality enhancement.

In addition to the conception of quality as exceptional referring to reputation with external stakeholders, the conception of quality as exceptional may also refer to the institutions' resources. As described in section 8.3, academics in this study provide various explanations for what can enhance or impede quality in teaching and one of those relate to teaching resources. Academics in this study express concerns regarding quality in teaching being impeded by lack of teaching resources. Therefore the data reveals that academics understand quality to mean the physical resources in the institution. Lecture theatres are construed to be of better of quality than classrooms. Furthermore, the equipping of venues with basic

teaching resources is construed to indicate quality. In this case, quality as exceptional refers to infrastructure and facilities available in the institution. The institution is taken to be prestigious if it has sufficient resources. As discussed in Chapter Two these refer to physical, financial and human resources that are efficient and sufficient. The findings indicate that there is a link between quality and resources:

> *If we are afforded good resources to do our job, we will have better quality* (Edith).

This academic links *good* resources to '*better'* quality. This finding is in line with Shanahan and Gerber, (2004, p. 169) who found that "quality is linked to and constrained by resources". The focus on resources can put pressure on government to increase the financial support it provides to public universities (Skolnik, 2010). This could be a reason why this conception of quality as exceptional is not prominent in the national and institutional policies, as the government and the institutions do not want to put themselves under pressure to supply resources irrespective of the economic situation of the country or institution. However, Pitman (2014) advocates that stakeholders must negotiate all definitions of quality not just preferred ones.

8.2.3 Quality as value for money

The third group of conceptions of quality are conceptions which relate to quality as value for money. This conception of quality, suggests that universities follow a corporate model as Haizel suggests:

> *Higher education institutions, the way they advertise themselves now they are a business. This is not just South Africa it's globally. They put vision and mission. In the olden days universities were ivory towers and academics were the gurus. Now it's not that, it's got a far more mmmhhh (*hesitation*), even if it is not a UoT it has a business market orientated slant to it. Students are your customers or clients you've got a duty to them……*

Haizel views universities around the world as adopting a business approach which is different from the '*olden days'* priorities. Universities in the "golden age" (Lomas, 2007) used to focus more on knowledge generation. According to Haizel, now they focus on being run like businesses. This finding is supported by Kettis, et al. (2013). The focus on customers is in

line with the conception of quality as value for money. In this conception the aim is to satisfy the customer therefore giving more attention to service as it is concerned with matching the customer expectations and keeping the customer happy. This is what Kayalci et al. (2012) call the 'customer focus'.

Brian reveals a conception of quality as value for money in this manner:

> *My understanding of quality first … when you meet the customer's expectations… of a product or a service…*
> *if that expectation is met, then you are delivering a quality product – a product of quality…In higher education our customers are our students, but some will say parents*

Brian articulates that quality is about satisfying the needs and the expectations of the customers and delivering a quality product. According to this view, quality is about a product or a service (Webbstock, 2008), particularly when teaching students who are already working and studying part time:

> *The part time students currently feel that they should not be doing too much theory because they are working already. They've got offices. They need to learn skills they can use in their current work environment. They don't need theory. I also agree with them in that ……..*(he went on to provide further details about his module).

The quotation above indicates that this academic takes seriously the views of the students as customers and is willing to listen to their suggestions and to meet their needs, in order to keep them satisfied. In this case, the conception of quality as value for money is based on students determining what quality is and allowing them to have a voice on what they should be taught. Students are stakeholders and customers and customer satisfaction is linked to quality (Ada, et al. 2017).

The findings in this study reveal that academics understand quality to mean value for money. This finding is in contradiction to Houston (2008) who found that most staff dismiss the idea of quality as satisfying the needs of the customers by stating that "this is not a shop". A study by Shanahan and Gerber (2004) also found that some academics view the notion of quality as value for money as an anathema. However, in my study, academics conceptualise quality as being about meeting the needs of the customers and delivering a quality service which is in line with quality as value for money. This conception is also engraved in the national and institutional policy documents (See sections 3.4 and 4.7).

Despite academics reporting the notion of quality as value for money, there is uncertainty from academics on the customer's identity in higher education. The uncertainty is whether the customers are the students, the parents or the industry. In Chapters Six and Seven we learnt that academics view students as well as employers as the customers in higher education. According to Ada, et al. (2017), higher education customers are the students.

Quality as value for money could be further linked to service delivery as was evident towards the end of the interview with Jane:

> *I think we covered everything but my personal opinion is that quality is a process. It is a continuous process of learning and trying to enhance the service delivery. It is very very important in terms of quality* (Jane).

Enhancing service delivery is associated with ensuring that the customers are satisfied by providing a good service, because if there is dissatisfaction from the customers they are more likely to complain. Therefore, the emphasis here is on an acceptable service.

Jane's quotation further refers to quality as not being a once-off activity but as a *continuous process*. This opinion is in line with what Cheng (2014) found in that her participants understood quality as an ongoing process. Dew (2009) asserts that continuous improvement refers to staff and how they perform their duties. This conception of quality as continuous improvement can be linked to quality as perfection and is in line with the European University Association (EUA) which states that quality is an ongoing exercise to be pursued continuously (European University Association, 2006).

8.2.4 Quality as fitness for purpose

The fourth conception of quality refers to the extent to which the institution is in line with what it has set out to do. According to the academics, quality relates to the policies in the institution, as well as the institution's graduation rates. The study reveals that quality is understood to be the content of the policies in the institution. As one academic advised me during our interview:

> *As a favour to yourself you can look at the policies or maybe not as a favour to yourself but to the question* (Gilberto).

This academic understands quality to reside in the policy documents, as he also explained that:

> ……*If the Quality Unit can be serious about quality as they are on paper* (Gilberto)……..

Part of this quotation appears under section 6.4.1, to describe what academics describe as the role (and lack of a visible role) of the Quality Unit in attending to issues raised by students in student evaluation forms.

Another conception of quality which relates to quality as fitness for purpose is about students completing their studies:

> …….. *the quality of the students, the graduation rate. I am not very much into research, but you read that the graduation rates and throughput rates are going down over the world. In South Africa this is a major problem* (Gilberto).

These findings are in line with Kalayci, et al. (2012) who also found that academics have a conception of quality as fitness for purpose, meaning top results achieved by graduates. However this academic distances herself from the research purpose of higher education institutions. These findings of academics conceptualising quality as value for money and quality as fitness for purpose are different from what Akalu (2016) found, in an Ethiopian context, in that quality as value for money is not largely emphasised by academics.

In summary, this section on the conceptions of quality first reveals that academics mainly conceptualise quality as transformation with transformation for the individual students achieved by grooming them, developing graduate attributes and making an impact on their lives. Furthermore, transformation is evident when individual academics acquire post graduate qualifications, publish their research, develop the personality and teaching strategies needed for changing students and quality as transformation refers to a particular individual in the institution. Secondly, academics report quality as exceptional when the institution is offering qualifications which are '*relevant'* to industry, '*in line with what other universities are teaching'*, able to place students for WIL and has sufficient teaching resources. Thirdly, quality is understood as value for money which emphasises meeting the expectations of the customers, delivering a quality product, considering the opinions of students, enhancing service delivery and pursuing a process of continuous improvement. Lastly, according to

academics, quality relates to fitness for purpose which is reported to be what is indicated '*on paper'* and the rate in which students complete their qualifications.

There is a minimal element of quality as perfection. In this study, quality as perfection mainly refers to compliance which is one of the explanations academics provide, for the practices they report to be implementing (as discussed under section 8.4.1).

I now move on to discuss the influences on quality in teaching and academics' explanations for the practices they report to be implementing.

8.3 Academics' views on what affects quality in teaching

According to Cardoso, et al. (2016, p. 2), "If academics are expected to play an important role in improving quality, it is perhaps important to take into account their views on the main obstacles to quality". As noted in Chapter Three, the improvement of quality, particularly in teaching, is a national priority. As this is an explanatory case study (see Chapter Five) it is important to understand what can enable or inhibit (Rule & John, 2011) quality in teaching. The academics' views on what can enhance or inhibit quality relate to both the national and institutional levels.

The academics identify institutional mergers as proposed at national level as having affected quality in teaching. The views which relate to the institution are human and physical resources, organisational culture, working at a satellite campus, organisational structure and the language of instruction used in the institution.

8.3.1 A merged institution

Academics express their views regarding how institutional mergers influence quality. SAUT is an institution which was formed from a merger between two technikons (see Chapter One). Institutional mergers are considered to impede quality. Gilberto explains:

> *I think the mergers had a lot do with decreasing the quality in the institutions. Heee* (hesitation), *I think the expectation was to improve the quality but it made the direct opposite. In my view, the good institutions were brought down. This view is not researched, it's just this idea that I've got that quality in the good institutions and the*

> *average ones was brought down... But a young person who has joined the institution may not notice that. But unfortunately I am not that young I know the institutions before and after the mergers.*

These findings contradict Reddy's (2008) finding that staff believe the merger positively impacts on quality. It has been noted that mergers affect higher education in both anticipated and unanticipated ways (Dhunpath, et al. 2016). According to Gilberto, mergers yield an unintended consequence of 'bringing down' quality in South African higher education institutions that were considered as '*good'* and those institutions considered as '*average'*. Gilberto's explanation of '*good'* and 'average'can be linked to a conception of quality as exceptional. In this conception, quality is about the reputation of the institution.

Another negative effect of institutional mergers on quality is described as:

> *the Quality Unit is ex ……* (name of the first previous institution) *rooted and here on campus we are ex ……..* (name of the second previous institution) *and we are in ……..*(name of the city). *After so many years since the merger, that and the fact that we are in ……*(name of the city) *therefore the channels of communication between the Quality Unit and individuals and departments is not what it should be* (Albert).

According to this academic, the disconnection between the Quality Unit and the particular campus on which the study is undertaken, results from the fact that historically the Quality Unit and the studied site were two different institutions. Institutional mergers are considered to have resulted in a current communication challenge between the Q*uality Unit and individual departments*. Lomas (2007) also notes a psychological distance between departments and quality management staff in the UK context.

8.3.2 Physical and Human resources

> *A problem mentioned by several universities, particularly those that underwent mergers, is the difference in the quality of infrastructure at different campuses* (Council on Higher Education, 2015, p. 168).

Resources relate to physical resources and human resources. Academics in this study described availability of resources as quality enhancers and unavailability and inadequacy of resources as quality impediments. This is in line with Zaki and Rashidi (2013) who state that important but often neglected aspect of quality is the availability of resources. This finding is consistent with Shanahan and Gerber (2004) who found quality is linked to and constrained by resources. Hence, quality in teaching is seen to depend on physical resources, including

the availability of the internet, sufficient bandwidth and lecture theatre setups. The lack of physical resources is considered to impede quality. These include classrooms instead of lecture theatres, lack of blinds, lack of data projectors, lack of air-conditioning in the classrooms, insufficient seating and insufficient classrooms.

Human resources considered as enhancing quality were identified by academics as staff working in support services departments, low staff turnover and permanent employment. Human resources as impeders to quality were shortage of staff in the printing department, contract employment, lack of interaction between the QPO and academics as well as workload issues.

8.3.2.1 Physical resources

Available and sufficient physical resources and human resources are perceived by academics as having the potential to enhance quality:

> *When it comes to assessment of practicals, other support structures play an important role in ensuring the quality of the assessments for example technicians, resources, internet, infrastructure, bandwidth etc. All those things need to be in order to ensure that we deliver a quality course* (Brian).

This is an indication that with particular reference to assessing practical components, the essentials needed are noted and are currently available. A worrying finding in Kenya is that some practical modules are only assessed theoretically because of the shortage of resources (Kagondu & Marwa, 2017).

Lecture theatres instead of classrooms are also perceived as quality enhancers:

> *In my previous institution we had lecture theatres. Everything was set up nicely; it was set up professionally for lecturing* (Fana).

This indicates a focus on how the buildings look rather than the usability of the building in accommodating different teaching and learning approaches. Insufficient and inappropriate physical resources are identified as possible quality impeders:

> *……. this is what I have been complaining about all the time; the university is telling us that we need more students graduating. More students to be registered and more students to graduate. More input must be equal to more output. I always complain*

> *in terms of our resources. We have a problem with resources at this particular campus, the teaching aids. Teaching aids will improve our quality. If we are afforded good resources to do our job, we will have better quality* (Edith).

The significance of resources is confirmed in a study conducted by Mkhize (2014). Along the same lines, the lack of teaching resources is considered by Mcinnis (2000) and Garwe (2012) as a hindrance to quality in teaching.

Academics view the teaching-learning environment such as the classroom set-up as compared to the lecture theatre set-up, the temperature of the classroom and unavailability of basic resources such as chairs, as having the potential to impede quality. Fana suggests that:

> *So here, it's either the classrooms are too cold or too hot and there are no sufficient chairs, some students have to stand you know. That affects you know, everything.*
>
> *If you look at the classrooms in this campus, they are not at all conducive for learning. For example, we, as much as we do have projectors in some of the venues but the visibility is not clear because there are no blinds. So there is too much lighting* (Fana).

The teaching-learning environment is also seen to impede quality in teaching, as academics note lack of resources as negatively affecting quality in teaching. The data further indicate some levels of stress associated with this lack of resources:

> *In our department there are five lecturers or actually there are seven lecturers and two roving data projectors. We have to run from that end to this end because our data projectors are kept in the secretary's office. We overloaded. We hampered. We tired and we are carrying handouts as well.*
>
> *For me resources play an important part in determining the quality that we are looking for, because that is what we looking for… If we don't have the right tools to start off with, then we going to be severely lacking in terms of quality* (Edith).
>
> *The lecture venues are not adequate and not conducive for teaching and learning. Students are taught in classrooms without air-conditioning and the necessary infrastructure like digital projectors and smart boards. This poses a problem especially with the afternoon classes as students cannot concentrate* (Document B1).
>
> *If students are sitting in a lecture for a double period, this is two hours they have nothing to look at. Their minds will wander. You know things like that. There is nothing to keep them motivated and stimulated. This teacher is showing this, let me look at that you know, things like that, you will be amazed how that* (using data projectors) *captivates their attention* (Edith).

Feigenbaum and Iqani, (2015) support these findings as they also found that there were concerns regarding a lack of resources to ensure. Additionally, Pithouse-Morgan et al. (2016) noted from the poems written by academics that academics struggled with a lack of resources. Along the same lines, Cheng's (2014) participants also felt that inequality in resources has an influence on quality. Similar findings are noted by Leibowitz, et al. (2017) and Kagondu and Marwa, (2017) that there are challenges in the provision of good infrastructure for teaching and that can negatively impact on quality.

The lack of physical resources is not the only concern for academics. Another concern is about the number of students registered in the institution in relation to resource capacity (as was also noted in section 7.7). Edith explains:

> *Resources as a whole we look at everything that has to do with infrastructure you know. The number of students in the classroom fitting 170 to 180 students in our venues in summer 'is not on'. There is no aircon. I know this is an old problem at this campus; venues and air conditioners and the cramping you know*.

This finding is echoed by Pithouse-Morgan et al. (2016) who found that overcrowded classrooms in South Africa are impediments to quality in teaching. Akalu (2016) in an Ethiopian context notes a mismatch between the student numbers and resource availability and Leibowitz, et al. (2017) found that the staff-student ration in South African UoTs is relatively high compared with traditional universities.

Prioritisation of resources by institutional managers is criticised by academics. One example is prioritisation of technology in teaching (as discussed in section 6.2.4) over basic teaching resources:

> …….. *this type of technology (*BLACKBOARD*) is out of place in this particular campus and the money should have been used for proper desks, or air conditioning at least* (Gilberto)

Gilberto goes on to propose an alternative choice regarding the prioritisation of resources; that the money currently being used to purchase technology should be used to purchase windows:

> *Classrooms do not have equipment. All this equipment they are buying and yet classrooms don't have windows.*

These quotations seem to indicate academics' priorities are different from those of the management of the institution. Academics prioritise basic resources such as chairs, blinds, windows, air-conditioning, projectors and lecture venues whereas management prioritises technology for online learning. The policies in the institution expect that e-learning should be integrated as a teaching and learning strategy (South African University of Technology, 2013a; South African University of Technology, 2013b; South African University of Technology, 2015; South African University of Technology, n.d) and that academics experiment with new technologies (South African University of Technology, 2013b).

Having identified the challenges regarding lack of resources Edith claims that despite these challenges, the campus has been able to *produce good graduates using what is available.* This recognition is in line with Blackmore's (2004) view that quality is about doing the best one can under the conditions in which one works. This indicates that quality in teaching in some cases can be achieved despite the inadequacy of resources and there could be factors assisting in enhancing quality. This finding contradicts that of Mcinnis (2000) who argues that academics are losing the battle to maintain quality as a result of, amongst many things, resources being stretched to the limit.

The focus on physical resources is in line with a conception of quality as exceptional, which refers to quality as the resources in the institution.

8.3.2.2 Human resources

Academics identified human resources as having an impact on quality: Brian suggests:

> *There is a strong focus on ensuring the quality of teaching. And our Quality Department is responsible for this. You know, we talking about the issue of teaching but I feel that support services have a complementary role to play in terms of education* (Brian).

Brian goes on to provide examples of such support services staff as student housing staff, library staff as well as computer technicians. He further states that:

> *We may be ensuring that we are delivering our lectures and ensuring quality of those lessons but at the same time it will defeat the purpose if the student is not supported in some way by the other departments.*

Brian highlights of the importance of a holistic approach in higher education which acknowledges the importance of teaching staff and non-teaching staff in providing quality.

Low staff turnover is considered to be a quality enhancer:

> *We have been fortunate enough because over the years there has been stability in staff and low staff turnover* (Albert).

Selesho (2014) agrees that high employee turnover has huge negative implications for quality.

Academics identified permanent employment, as compared to contract employment, as a quality enhancer. The view is that the academic feels free to participate in discussions and debates taking place within the institution without fear if he or she is permanently employed.

> *… I am fortunate that I am a permanent appointee therefore I can say whatever I want without worrying about my job. I have caused a lot of friction in the department. If I was a contract appointee I doubt my contract would have been renewed* (Gilberto)

This indicates that there is some type of job security '*without worrying about my job'* as well as confidence associated with being permanently employed. In contrast, Edith explains as discussed under 7.3 that she was not aware of the AQM process and believed that she was excluded from some of the quality expectations because of her employment status. Edith suggests:

> *It is not a very nice feeling because you also feel that you are part of the institution. You want to belong to this family. But in certain situations we are side-tracked* (Edith)

The ratio between part-time and full-time staff is also important. Garwe (2012) argues that if there are more part-time academics than full-time academics quality can be affected negatively. Leibowitz, et al. (2017) also claim that casualisation of teaching staff can have negative consequences.

A shortage of staff in a crucial department such as the printing department was identified as having the potential to impede quality. Celiwe wrote in her AQM report:

> *Printing is the major nightmare when it comes to course packs printing! It appears as if our printing room is either short-staffed or inadequately resourced. I say this because printing takes time to be done; lately I have been told that the machine cannot copy documents with photographs. After waiting, I had to send my printing to the other campus where it was done timeously!* (Document C1).

A lack of interaction between academics and the Quality Promotions Officer (QPO) in the faculty was found to be a quality impediment:

> *There is a quality person in faculty but no interaction with staff* (Celiwe).

Another issue (related to human resources) identified by academics as having an impact on quality is the workload of academics. Fana described this as follows:

> *But the biggest challenge for all UoTs is the shortage of staff, because if you go to traditional universities you find that lecturers are responsible for one subject only. I worked at a traditional university I had one subject, then I went to another UoT before coming here I had lots of subjects to teach. Then I went back to another university I was teaching one subject again, then I come to this UoT my workload is very hectic*.

This finding that workloads of academics impact negatively on quality is in line with the findings by Pithouse-Morgan et al. (2016). Melin et al. (2014) agree that workloads affect quality as academics tend to lower standards in order to cope. Similarly, Cardoso et al. (2016) note that heavy work schedules can negatively impact quality. In an Ethiopian context, Akalu (2016) found that there has been an increase in academics' workloads because of teaching large classes and this caused a decline in quality. The results in this study indicate that those academics who report that they have a heavy workload tend not to prioritise quality issues.

8.3.3 Working at a satellite campus, the structure of the institution and the culture of the institution

Given that SAUT is a multi-campus institution, the study was limited to one particular campus (see Chapter One). All campuses in the institution are expected to maintain the same quality standards as stated in the quality assurance policy of the institution (South African University of Technology, 2009a). However, academics describe working at a satellite

campus as a quality impediment as they feel neglected, not belonging to the institution and not being fully recognised by management:

> *I don't know maybe it is because we are a satellite campus, because management pays less attention to us than those who are in the main campus. I don't know. The problem with satellite campuses is that we are neglected. It's like you are on your own, you are swimming in your own ocean. The Dean of the faculty is not even located here……*(Fana).

> *Another thing to ensure quality is the interaction with Senior Management. Their interaction with academics perhaps visits to the campus. How often do we see the Dean or the VC coming to our campus just to interact with the staff? Okay, from time to time they will come here if there are important meetings or interviews. We feel like we are step brother or step sister in this institution. Will it not be good for quality if we had more visits from Senior Management? To interact with us, just to knock on my door and ask how I am doing, how is the semester? I will be so happy. That will definitely motivate me. If you are motivated will that not improve your quality? Will that not have a bearing on performance? That bearing on performance will it not improve quality? And make you a better happy person* (Edith).

This last quotation indicates that the visibility of senior management in a satellite campus, the interaction between academics and the leaders as well as the external motivation from management has the potential to enhance quality which according to this academic would lead to improvement in performance. This academic sees authorities in the institution as having the potential to enhance quality rather than to only assure it. This finding is in line with Sari, et al. (2016) who contend that a critical dimension of quality is keeping instructors in the institution encouraged. Furthermore, leaders provide guidance to implement the set policies, to achieve the identified objectives and to set forth quality (Zaki & Rashidi, 2013), being important for spreading quality (Kagondu & Marwa, 2017). These findings, indicating a lack of visibility of management in this satellite campus, are in line with those by Gumede (2014), whose respondents expressed the need to see more executive managers on satellite campuses on a regular basis. However, this study found that regular visits regarded as important by academics, rarely happen and in some cases do not happen at all. Cardoso, et al. (2016) found that management does not support the academic community, have too much power and aere driven by personal interests other than the desire for quality in teaching and the needs of the academic community.

In addition to the academics at this particular campus believing that they are alienated, they resent having to drive to attend meetings on the main campus:

> *The staff at this campus are at a disadvantage as well because, they have to drive to another campus as well for their meetings* (Haizel).
>
> *…….I had to drop off the child at school at 07:00 then drive for one hour to the other campus. After the stress of driving you are not going to learn anything* (Gilberto).

Working at a satellite campus is considered a quality impediment as academics have to leave their students for almost half a day or a whole week, in some cases, to attend meetings or workshops on the main campus. Gilberto explained during the interview that he had to be away from his students for a whole week. He explained that:

> *And heeeee in terms of policy, I am employed here but had to go to the other campus for induction and it became the whole week.*

This finding is recognised by the CHE when analysing QEP Phase One institutional reports. It is noted that:

> *Multi-campus universities face challenges when it comes to collaboration among academics and sharing of resources, particularly when the campuses are far apart. In addition, a great deal of time is lost in travelling between campuses* (Council on Higher Education, 2015, p. 159).

The academics do not cite only working at a satellite campus to be a quality impediment. They also report the structure of the institution and the culture in the institution to impact negatively on quality. This resonates with Zaki and Rashidi (2013) who argue that organisational structures and policies are interdependent; policy alone cannot work in a vacuum.

The effect of structure on quality is explained as follows:

> *……we have to face the revolution and re-look at our teaching strategy and the structure of our institutions. Paul Freire writes about the pedagogy of the oppressed. The structure won't permit dialogue at the moment at our institution. It is not allowing for the full potential of quality therefore the structure will have to change* (Albert)

This indicates a negative attitude towards the current organisational structure and the teaching strategies at SAUT. The findings reveal that at times the structure in the institution is seen as a barrier to quality practices in teaching. In some cases there is 'dictatorship' from leadership regarding the practices to be enacted as described in Chapter Seven. Albert is proposing that the structure and teaching strategies need to be revised in order to '*allow full potential of quality'*. This finding is supported by Ehlers, (2009) and Cardoso, et al. (2016) in that the organisational structure can affect quality.

The institution advocates the development of an institutional culture to support the identity of being a University of Technology (South African University of Technology, 2008-2012) as well as the establishment of an organisational culture of quality (South African University of Technology, 2009). Organisational culture is identified as a quality impediment in an interview with Albert. He explains that by 'culture' he is referring to '*a way of doing things in the organisation'.* Albert states that:

> *To be honest with you (*strong voice), *I believe that it is an organisational and cultural problem the way of networking, and the communication networking base on the other campuses almost operates independently of the other let alone institutionally wide.*

8.3.4 The language of instruction used in the institution as well as the language taught

> *Language has been and continues to be a barrier to access and success in higher education; both in the sense that African and other languages have not been developed as academic/scientific languages and in so far as the majority of students entering higher education are not fully proficient in English and Afrikaans* (Department of Education, 2002, p 4).

The academics indicated that the language of instruction used in the institution was linked to quality. The use of one language as the language of instruction in the institution is identified as having the potential to impede quality in teaching. In the case of SAUT, the language of instruction is English. However, the majority of the students at SAUT are English second language speakers indicating that students are learning all their subjects in a second language. Haizel explains that it seems as if:

> *…….some of them* (the students) *have never written an English sentence in their lives before. It is what the teacher told them in school …*

Haizel raised a concern with the institutional expectation that students should be proficient in the English language in order for them to understand lectures and further identified this to be an issue of quality and to challenge, given the diverse background of the students who are registered in the institution. This seems to be a challenge because, according to her, in other countries some learners in high school are taught all their subjects in their mother tongue. In the South African context, higher education institutions accept students who are from well-equipped schools taught in English, as well as students from poorly equipped schools who are not taught in English. All these students are fitted in one class with the assumption that they will all understand the lecturer at the same level and they will be able to express themselves clearly when writing and when speaking during lectures. Toni and Makura (2015) assert that some students struggle to express themselves in English since English is their second or third language.

Academics identify the neglect of the language struggles of students by lecturers and the institution as related to quality. Gilberto states that:

> *…….in this institution the current ……..*(name of the subject), *works on the assumption that students who are taken in* (registered), *know how to read and write English. It's a matter of teaching them the format of ……..(*name of the document taught). *It does not address grammar. Where students cannot read and write. We know this is the case, but we assume we must just forge ahead and the policy is in such that it is not your problem we must forge ahead.*

This refers to the institution and academics not accommodating the limited English language proficiencies of the students, which can have negative effect on quality and on the academic performance. Akalu (2016) found that declining quality in teaching and learning was linked to poor command of the English language. However in this study the view was that the issue of language was affecting quality in teaching, but was not spoken off:

> *The issue of language is the elephant in the room* (Albert)

Using English as the only medium of instruction is flagged as a quality impediment in teaching which requires a solution. Mgqwashu (2011) argues that African languages such as isiZulu and Sotho should be also used as languages of instruction because these are first languages to many students. However, Sikhwari, et al. (2015) found that students express *disgust* to staff members who are using their mother tongue to teach in a South African institution instead of using English. Students argue that this will hinder their ability to develop their English language skills. The issue of quality and the language of instruction used in an institution is a contentious issue.

A solution of abandoning English and adopting African languages only as languages of instruction is not proposed by participants in this study. Three solutions are proposed. The first solution is to pay attention to the capabilities of the students, the second solution is team teaching and the third solution is '*breaking the class into groups so that discussions can happen in different languages'*. Encouraging discussions in different languages could be one of the ways of promoting the use of African languages in university classrooms:

> *The first step will have to be team teaching. You can't expect one person to be completely competent in both languages. This should not happen in discussion groups, it should happen in the classroom. You talk about concepts in English then break the class into groups so that discussions can happen in different languages.* (Albert).

Hence students could be encouraged to unpack some of the concepts in their mother tongue. These discussions taking place in different languages could assist in interpreting various concepts thus blending the languages in teaching and learning and embracing multilingualism. Van Rensburg and Lamberti, (2004) argue that multilingualism in the classroom could be an alternative to the issue of language difficulties. In this study, the use of the metaphor of '*the issue of language as the elephant in the room'* signals the extent of the seriousness of this issue of using English only as the language of instruction at SAUT, as it could be a barrier to teaching and learning. The metaphor further indicates that this is something not talked about in the institution. Feigenbaum and Iqani (2015) argue that academics need to be supported to deal with challenges resulting from linguistic and cultural diversity in the classroom. Another recommendation is that support services should be provided for students who have difficulty in English (Steyn, et al. 2014).

Quality is not only linked to language struggles of English second language speakers. Quality is also linked to English first language speakers learning an African language. Albert suggests:

> *Another thing to look at in your study; the whole question of quality in an institution, in a province where 80% of the population speaks isiZulu as the first language. When talking about quality in any subject you cannot ignore the issue of language. All students must learn isiZulu. I have been saying this for eight years all students must learn isiZulu* (Albert).

Learning an African language could enable students who are not African language speakers to communicate with the wider population. This suggestion to teach students an African language represents the adoption of an emerging conception of quality which is context dependent, in order to address the needs of the students and the community in that particular context.

8.4 Explanations for academics' reported practices

In this last part of the chapter, I present data relating to the last question posed in this study which relates to why academics implement the practices they report they are implementing. In answering this question, data were obtained from individual semi-structured interviews with the nine academics at SAUT. Academics were asked to provide explanations for why they were implementing the practices they reported to be implementing as presented in Chapters Six and Seven. The analysis reveals two main explanations for the practices. The first explanation of the practices is that academics are mainly complying with policy. Secondly academics take it upon themselves to implement the practices in order to assure and enhance quality in teaching.

8.4.1 Compliance-driven

Academics explain the main reason for implementing the practices as compliance with institutional policy. Celiwe explains as follows:

> *To be honest because they are done* (student evaluations) *by the university and it's a requirement, it's more like a policy. I am being honest (laughs)*

With me personally, the e-mails from the Quality Unit they scare me - that is when I realise that quality is a serious matter.

Khethiwe: But, why are using the words "they scare you"?

I think it's because, I think they are (the Quality Unit) *very serious about quality, because to get an e-mail from them I know it is a serious matter. I know if I don't do it I am going to be in trouble.*

Academics further explain reasons for the practices as:

*Because the institution requires me to do so. As I said, honestly I do not see any point in doing those things because they do not act on them anyway (*Fana*).*

In most cases but, people are committed to the institution so that they don't get fired (Gilberto)

Gilberto's explanation indicates the tendency to comply with institutional policy which, according to him, is demonstrated by other academics as a means of avoiding job loss. This explanation for compliance in order to avoid job loss could thus be associated with an explanation provided by Filippakou, (2011) in that policy documents about quality, "represent an aura of authority" (p. 25). Hence academics believe that they are obliged to obey the rules of the authorities. They view policies as laws to be upheld. Academics believe that if they do not participate, it is dangerous for their career (Blackmore, 2004) and they will be punished in some way (Jones & De Saram, 2005). This finding differs from that of Kagondu and Marwa (2017) where there is ownership of the policies by staff. In my study, academics perceive a distance between them and the policies and believe that there is a distance between them and the Quality Unit.

These compliance-driven explanations for implementing of the practices are similar to what is observed by Borden (2011) in that one answer we often hear from members of the academy when discussing quality issues is 'because we have to'. Academics explain that some quality practices are imposed on them. This is evident by the frequent use of the words such as '*I was told', 'then you get told' 'you will have' 'I demand that you do them*'. The culture of compliance is found in the institution complying with the national processes and developing its policies to be the image of the national policies as discussed in Chapter Four. This then leads to the institution expecting academics to comply with the institutional policies. This

compliance-driven culture is particularly evident in the case of administering student evaluations using institutional forms, writing AQM reports, attending an induction programme and preparing for programme reviews (mostly preparing files).

The data further supports Dew's (2009) findings that academics view quality as conformity, as they feel obliged to follow the institutional policies. Academics attribute their implementation of the practices to the institution (Dongwe, 2013) and its policies. Therefore, some academics are extrinsically motivated to engage in the practices. Blackmore (2004) is of the view that compliance in the quality game is because of universities' reliance on reputation locally and internationally. However, it has been noted that compliance does not promote improvement (Jibladze, 2013).

For Jane and Albert compliance is more than simply obeying the rules. It is also about being in line with a particular notion of quality (quality as value for money) and about the philosophy of the institution:

> *…because we want to improve quality. Quality of lecturing quality of service delivery. We want to see how we can help the students because they are our customers at the end of the day. We trying to create a studentcentred environment…* (Jane)
>
> *I wanted to bring the assessment into a more studentcentred approach* (Albert)

8.4.2 Self-driven

On the other end of the continuum, the findings from the data suggest that in some cases, academics are to be self-driven in implementing the quality practices. The data indicate practices which are not stated in the policy documents. Edith replies as follows in relation to a question which asks why she implements the practices she reports to be implementing:

> *I suppose is to get an evaluation, to get a feeling of what your students think about this subject which has been taught to them, how students feel about the lecturer that is teaching the subject. Is the lecturer efficient? Is the lecturer on time? It is good to receive that feedback from ultimately the person who is receiving that service which is the student*

Academics indicate interest in the feedback provided by students. This shows personal interest and personal commitment to engage in quality practices irrespective of policy expectations.

Haizel's explanation for her practice of writing reflective reports is:

> *I try to write more reflections for myself at the end of every year. I take it upon myself to write a report at the end of each year. But I think the HoD must write the report every year I think, and she gets some stats and things from us. But for myself I try every year to write a reflection on how the year has gone* (Haizel)

The frequent use of the word *self* in the quotation above, clearly indicates that this academic is self-driven in her implementation of the practice of writing self-reflection notes. This is a practice she initiated on her own with her colleague as discussed under 7.2.4. Furthermore this quotation indicates a sense of control in the quality practices.

However, in some cases an academic can be self-driven in implementing some practices and at the same time be compliance-driven in implementing other practices. This is evident when Haizel states she *unwillingly* administers student evaluations. She refers to the fact that she administers student evaluations because it is *demanded* of her, not because she so chooses, as is the case with the writing of reflective notes which she takes it upon herself to write.

Other academics refer to self-driven explanations in the following ways:

> *I see myself as an innovative educator; I don't want to do the same thing over and over again. I just feel that my personality is such in the classroom does not require a fixed visual presentation* (Albert)
>
> *From my experience and from my confidence, I realised that things needed to be changed and I went ahead and changed them. Also I am confident enough to tackle what needs to be tackled. It's a personal commitment. You need probably a vision* (Gilberto)
>
> *…..over the years through different courses that I have attended for example tertiary education practice. You start to rethink your strategies* (Albert)

These findings, which relate to staff taking the initiative in their practices, are in line with Reddy (2008) who found that the staff are intrinsically motivated in their jobs. In this study, some academics show a deep commitment to enhancing quality in teaching.

Leadership is also identified as influencing teaching practices:

> *I think I was encouraged to do it* (writing reflective notes) *by my previous HoD ……..*(name of a person) *and also when I did Honours and Masters as well, we were encouraged to reflect* (Haizel).

8.5 Conclusion

In summary, this chapter reveals that academics in this study have different ideas of the notion of quality in higher education. Such variation is observed in the literature as well as in the policy documents. The different views about what constitutes quality serve different interests and ideologies (Skolnik, 2010). The five conceptions of quality discussed in the literature were used as a lens to analyse how academics conceptualise quality.

It appears that the dominant conception of quality amongst academics at SAUT is that of quality as transformation, which according to these academics in this study mainly relates to developing the student and making an impact in the life of a student. This conception of quality as transformation is different from what quality as transformation meant at national level where it refers mainly to redressing the imbalances of the past and increasing access and success. As indicated in Table 10 the academics also conceptualise quality as exceptional, quality as value for money and quality as fitness for purpose. Quality as exceptional is not featured in the national and institutional documents; however academics construe quality to mean teaching resources, placements of students for WIL and offering relevant qualifications. Academics' conceptions of quality, focusing more on quality as transformation, indicate that when academics think about quality they mean quality enhancement more than quality assurance. This finding contradicts Elassy, (2015) who found that academics' conceptions of quality are related to quality assurance more than quality enhancement. Academics understand quality to mean different things in the institution: from students, to staff, reputation in industry, to service delivery and having good resources.

	Quality as exceptional	Quality as perfection	Quality as fitness for purpose	Quality as value for money	Quality as transformation
National level			√	√	√
Institutional level			√	√	√
Academics	√		√	√	√

Table 10: Conceptualisation of quality

In addition to academics reporting their conceptions of quality, they provided various explanations on what they considered as enhancers or impeders to quality in teaching. This is in line with Hemer (2014) in that quality in teaching is possible under the right conditions. The impeders noted by academics are both at national level and institutional level. At national level, the issue is the consequences of this institution being a merged institution. This is viewed to have had a negative impacted on quality. Another quality impeder is the absence of some important physical resources needed for teaching and learning. This is mainly about the teaching-learning environment described by academics as *not conducive* for teaching and learning. The unconducive teaching and learning environment includes things such as insufficient chairs, broken windows, insufficient desks, lack of blinds, lack of air conditioners and lack of data projectors. There is also a concern regarding shortage of teaching venues and overcrowding in the venues. Available physical resources such as the internet and sufficient bandwidth are identified as quality enhancers. Academics further consider human resources as quality impeders. These include shortage of staff in the printing department, contract employment status and interaction between the QPO and academics. Enhancers relating to human resources in the institution are staff in Support Service departments, low staff turnover as well as permanent employment.

Working at a satellite campus is also viewed as having a negative impact on quality. The view is that academics on this campus are at a *disadvantage* since they are expected to drive a long distance to attend meetings and workshops on the main campus and they resent this. Academics believe that they are alienated and expressed opinions such as they feel they are '*swimming*' in their own ocean as a result of working at a satellite campus. Data further indicates that the current structure and culture of the institution have a negative impact on

quality. The data further reveals the issue of English as the only language of instruction at SAUT as a quality impediment. This takes into consideration the diverse backgrounds of students who register in the institution. Academics refer to the issue of language as an obvious but no one talks about. The data reveal that currently there are insufficient mechanisms to support the language deficiencies of students for those students who need assistance with English as a language. The data further reveal that there are no current mechanisms for teaching at least one African language which is proposed to be isiZulu and this was considered to be an issue of quality.

The chapter ends with explanations provided by academics on why they implement the practices they report to be implementing. The study found that practices are compliance-driven, self-driven and influenced by leadership and educational background of an academic.

Despite the concerns and the challenges academics have with institutional quality processes and despite believing that they are overloaded, stressed, dictated to at times, frustrated by lack of resources and hold views that quality processes have little to no impact on quality in teaching, they show high levels of self-efficacy. The study reveals that some academics have a personal interest in improving quality, being self-driven in the implementation of their practices. The study suggests that there could be emerging conceptions of 'quality as self-efficacy' and 'quality as self-identity'. These refer to the individuals in the institution, their self-efficacy related to teaching in higher education as well as their self-identity. Hemer, (2014) argues that the teaching strategies one chooses depend on whether one's self-identity is linked to being a good teacher. An example of this in this study could be the self-reflective reports reported to be initiated by academics in this study. Mårtensoon, et al. (2014) states that reflective practices need to have an element of self-monitoring. It follows that if academics see themselves as having teaching identities, their practices in teaching will be of higher quality. The self-identities could be coupled with positive attitudes towards quality processes and towards students. Some academics indicate high levels of resilience, improvisation and a determination for quality in teaching.

Chapter Nine consolidates the findings by theorising on the nexus between policy, practices, and conceptions. Chapter Nine, also acts as a conclusion.

CHAPTER NINE: POLICY-PRACTICE-CONCEPTIONS NEXUS

9.1 Introduction

The issue of quality in higher education is a global concern. Various structures have been set up on different continents to deal with the issue, particularly quality in teaching. South Africa has introduced different initiatives and policies over a number of years to emphasise the focus on quality. The 'Framework for the Institutional Quality Enhancement in the second period of Qualty Assurance' (Council on Higher Education, 2014) at national level, sets the basis for concentrating on policies and practices, stating that t*eaching is affected by policies and practices in the institution* (p. 18). The main focus of the QEP project is "on the improvement of undergraduate teaching and learning, by asking what we do, how we do it and why" (Council on Higher Education, 2014, p. 10). Hence, it is imperative for researchers to pay attention to policies and practices related to quality in teaching with particular reference to understanding what practices are implemented and why the practices are implemented in different contexts. Focusing on the reasons for the implementing the practices is critical for improving quality in teaching as is paying attention to conceptualisations of quality at different levels of the higher education system.

The study is particularly important in the South African context. There is a need to study academics' practices taking into consideration the changes that have taken place in this sector (see Chapter Three) as well as the challenges faced by the sector. These challenges include the diversity of students who come to higher education, under-preparedness of students, massification of higher education, calls for fee-free higher education, calls to decolonise the higher education sector, as well as the increasing workloads of academics. It is essential to unpack what practices academics regard as quality practices and what they regard as quality indicators, in the context of the challenges they are faced with on a daily basis. There is a possibility that there is a relationship between the quality practices in teaching and student success and retention in higher education. It is essential to understand the relationship between policy and practice at a deeper level. The literature on the interaction between academics and institutional policy, particularly in relation to quality, indicates an awkward relationship. It was important to ascertain if this is the case in various contexts and to

ascertain to what extent the relationship hinders or promotes quality in teaching. The study posed the following questions:

-What do academics report as quality practices (practices related to quality) in teaching at a particular University of Technology in South Africa?

-What is the relationship between reported practices and institutional policy?

-What do academics understand quality to mean?

-Why do academics implement the practices they have reported?

Using qualitative research within an interpretivist paradigm this case study research was undertaken in order to explore quality practices in teaching on the ground and to ascertain how the practices relate (or do not relate) to institutional policy. This chapter highlights the key findings and provides deeper insights into what the study reveals and what the findings mean. The study has allowed an exploration across the different levels (national, institutional and on the level of academics) through various chapters. The previous chapters have explained the concepts, contexts and expected practices at the different levels. The previous chapters also presented the findings in this study.

The study noted that the national level draws heavily from the international level to craft some of its policies related to quality. The institution studied then crafts its policies to be in line with the national level. Academics as policy actors are then left with the responsibility of realising these policies through their practices. The study reveals harmonies and disconnections between policies in the different levels and between policy and practice in different levels. The study further reveals harmonies and disconnections on how quality is conceptualised at different levels. Harmonies represent homogenisation (similarity) in the different contexts. The concept that best captures homogenisation is isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983) which is a concept used in sociology to mean likeness. Isomorphism is one of the core concepts of neo-institutional theory. Neo-institutional theory can be used to explain homogeneity, disconnection or any potential nexus with regard to quality (Nabaho, et al. 2016). As explained in Chapter Two, neo-institutional theory uses the concepts of

isomorphism and de-coupling to help explain the relationship between different levels of quality practices and conceptions. There are various processes by means of which the external context forces organisations to be isomorphic to each other in form and in practice. The different forms of isomorphism are coercive isomorphism, mimetic isomorphism and normative isomorphism. Another neo-institutional theory concept, which is the opposite of isomorphism, is de-coupling. This means disconnecting. The study found evidence of the three isomorphic pressures as well as evidence of de-coupling when using neo-institutional theory as a lens to understand the findings at a deeper level.

In this chapter, I discuss the different forms of isomorphism evident in this study as well as the evidence of de-coupling across the different levels. The chapter moves on to proposing a model that could assist in better understanding quality practices. Contributions made by the study are provided together with recommendations arising from the study. The chapter ends with proposing future research.

9.2 Coercive isomorphism

A number of important issues emerged from the policy chapters and from the analysis of the data. Firstly, coercive isomorphism plays a role in the institution. Government regulations direct the functioning of the higher education sector in the country as well as the policies adopted by the institution. The main findings are that the institution is influenced by the external environment such as government legislation related to quality in teaching in higher education institutions in South Africa. The institutional policy documents have become isomorphic (Meyer & Rowan, 1977) with the national policy documents. The national government in South Africa has put in place quality initiatives at national level to assure and enhance quality. Therefore institutions are coerced from the national level to comply with legislation related to quality initiatives in order to maintain legitimacy and survival as well as to uphold their reputation as credible public higher education institutions. Quality regimes may have caused institutions to put their efforts into safeguarding their reputations rather than into protecting quality (Brown, 2012). Institutions rely on the government for various types of funding in order to survive. Such organisations become isomorphic and work in parallel with their environment (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). Institutions attempt to increase their

legitimacy and structure their activities to conform to the 'prescription' (Meyer & Rowan, 1977) in order to enhance their chances of survival.

Institutions have been made to comply with the national polices through institutional audits and harsh programme re-accreditations bearing serious consequences. The national policies are reproduced (Leibowtiz, et al. 2017) in the institution. This is consistent with Acer and Güçlü, (2017) as they note that in Turkey coercive pressures are easily identified through evidence of financial support of public universities by government. SAUT as an institution appears to be isomorphic to the national and global context.

The study tells us that the relationship between policy and practice in this context is such that there are synergies between practice and institutional policies as well as some disconnections. Blanco-Ramirez and Berger (2014) maintain that quality practices do not simply happen. They are a result of active engagements of institutional agents within and across borders. The thesis coming out of this study is that the discourse of quality in teaching has become harmonised to a certain extent at the different levels of higher education. Harmonisation implies adoption (Woldegiorgis, 2013). There is experimentation and adaptation (Zaki & Rashidi, 2013) in the practices reported. Academics as policy actors have embraced quality in teaching through their practices as a result of coercive isomorphism. A similar finding was reported in Uganda by Nabaho, et al., (2016) namely that the homogeneity of practices points to internationalisation of quality and can be attributed to isomorphic forces. Quality has been carried over and reproduced from one level to the next. The quality practices emerging at SAUT are mainly as a result of coercive isomorphism. The study illustrates that mostly the practices and the different levels (institutional level and academic level) are in harmony. Academics implement their practices in accordance with the institutional policy in order to stay legitimate and 'safe' in the institution and to avoid job loss.

The language of quality in higher education, to a certain extent has become embedded and permeates from international level to national level to institutional level and to academics with their conceptions of quality. The coercive isomorphism in the conceptions of quality could be associated with the importation of international experts to participate in institutional audits, thereby informing how quality should be conceptualised at national level. For instance, the notion of quality as value for money is reproduced across the different levels.

There is also a notion of quality as fitness for purpose in all levels. The notions of quality as value for money and quality as fitness for purpose are linked to the accountability agenda which is in line with coercive isomorphism. In addition to indications of coercive isomorphism in the conceptions of quality at national, institutional and individual academic levels, there is some level of isomorphism, too, between conceptions of quality held by academics and practices they report. This is evident in the conception of quality as value for money which focuses on customer satisfaction evident at national level, institutional level and at the level of academics. An example of a practice designed to ensure customer satisfaction is identifying and responding to the needs of the industry.

9.3 Mimetic isomorphism

At institutional level, the criteria used at institutional level for internally reviewing programmes are so similar to the criteria in the relevant national policies on programme reaccreditation that one may assume mimetic isomorphism to be at work. The similarities are not too surprising, possibly, given the levels of uncertainty on the part of the institutions when faced with what was a new national requirement that could have threatened their core functions. The institution studied largely conforms to the national level.

There is also mimetic isomorphism in terms of borrowing expected practices from other institutions. Academics report *looking into* what other institutions are teaching when designing academic programmes. This can be interpreted as modelling their teaching on other institutions which are perceived to be successful in teaching a particular programme.

The institution in its policy document further mimicked notions of quality adopted at national level such as quality as fitness for purpose, quality as value for money and quality as transformation. Academics also mimicked quality as value for money as they report that they understand quality to mean meeting customer expectations.

9.4 Normative isomorphism

Normative isomorphism deals with professionalisation of the employees. Academics in UoTs are characterised by strong liaison with industry. The University of Technology that has been studied seems to attempt to retain an industry focus. Academics in this study mainly refer to preparing students for the workplace through their practices rather than theoretical knowledge acquisition. Preparing students for the workplace is in line with the role of a University of Technology which is to deliver appropriately qualified graduates to the labor market; they (UoTs) are therefore more closely allied to the business sector to ensure relevant curricula (Du Prè, 2010).

The findings indicate normative isomorphism related to the institutional context as well as the mandate of the institution. However, the role of UoTs in South Africa is not static. It is changing in response to isomorphic forces. Context further shapes practices. Institutional context is important, because behavior is context-dependent (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). An example of institutional context shaping practices is where practices are reported to have been abandoned on the main campus but were continued on the satellite campus. Such practices included conducting oral presentations and using a variety of questions in an assessment. The different practices amongst the various campuses reflect the larger number of students registered on the main campus.

Context is not only a driver of quality in terms of how quality in teaching is practised and conceptualised. It can also drive enhancers and impeders to quality in teaching as well as contextual norms. Enhancers and impediments to quality in teaching in this context include the use of English as a language of instruction in the institution. This has taken a particular meaning in the South African context whereby it is associated with the colonisation of the higher education sector. Another factor which is specific to this particular campus relates to lack of basic resources such as blinds, chairs and air conditioners. There are also concerns related to overcrowded classrooms as examples of context related factors that are perceived as affecting quality in teaching. High workloads are identified as a serious problem specifically in UoTs and as an impediment to quality in teaching. Conditions of employment, leadership and institutional structure and culture are further contextual factors identified. These examples indicate that institutional context influences the practices irrespective of what the policy dictates and that we cannot separate what people say from the place where

they say it (Creswell, 2013). These above contextual factors can be described as normative isomorphism whereby the institutional type and context dictates the quality practices implemented.

The norms and standards of qualifications are determined by professional bodies where applicable. The norms drive the profession. Professional bodies are legislated, and academics should register with a particular professional body in order to teach in a profession and be recognised in that profession. Some academics in some professions are faced with normative pressures from professional bodies with regards to choice of content and assessment practices. Their practices are in line with their disciplinary identity (Cheng, 2011). Although this is an example of normative isomorphism, it can also be an example of coercive isomorphism as academics strive for legitimacy and survival in their profession. This is because professional bodies provide resources such as bursaries to students and supplement academic salaries (Ballim, et al. 2014). Furthermore, professional bodies are legislated and one must meet particular requirements in order to belong to a particular profession. This indicates that sometimes there might be overlaps between the different isomorphic forces: a force can be normative as well as coercive. The forces are not mutually exclusive and in practice the lines between them can be fuzzy. Normative isomorphism is also evident in academics' determination to satisfy employer needs (See section 9.2).

Furthermore, in the practices reported by academics, there is an element of internally driven practices being used to improve practice such as writing reflective notes in order to improve course material for the following year. This is an indication of academics recognising their university teacher profession. Professionalisation of academics as university teachers is currently voluntary with the exception of an induction programme for new staff. As discussed under section 3.2.3, there is also a SATN network which is responsible for enhancing teaching and learning in UoTs in South Africa and for networking amongst UoT professionals. The participation in SATN conferences is voluntary. There is also HELTASA, a body responsible for, amongst other things highlighting teaching and learning issues in all higher education institutions in South Africa. Participating in HELTASA conferences is also voluntary.

In this study there is clear evidence of the influence of isomorphic forces on practices and

conceptions. This could be because of high levels of coercive isomorphism which can be associated with managerialism. Managerialism can impact quality in teaching (Randle & Brady, 1997). Academics reported the influence of HoDs as line managers on the quality practices they reported to be implementing. This indicates normative isomorphism in the form of leadership and management in the institution. HoDs appeared to play an important role in forcing the implementation of the practices. However, there were concerns with the lack of visibility of executive management at the campus studied.

9.5 De-coupling

In some cases there were disconnections, disjunctures and tensions between national and institutional policies, between institutional policy and practices reported by academics and between conceptions of quality at the different levels. There was also de-coupling of structural subunits from each other (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). With regards to the disconnection between national and institutional policies, the institution's own expected quality practices, as stated in the institutional policy documents, are delinked from the national level. For instance, there is extended focus on the use of student evaluations at institutional level. However, the focus on student evaluations is found to be minimal in the current assurance, improvement and enhancement era at national level. Furthermore, the institution introduced its own expected quality practices in teaching such as preparing files for programme reviews, writing AQM reports and writing informal feedback on a feedback log. These are delinked from expected practices stated nationally.

With regard to the disconnection between policy and practice, there are practices delinked from institutional policy. For instance, the writing of reflective reports and monitoring student attendance are evidence of variation between policy and practice. These indicate self-drive rather than coercive, mimetic or normative isomorphism. Academics are implementing their own practices, not stated in the institutional policy. The study further reveals that academics ceremonialise and ritualise some of the practices without seeing the link between the practice and improvement in teaching and learning. According to the findings in this study some institutional quality processes are de-coupled from improving teaching and learning in the classroom. Academics adopt symbolic practices which appeared at face value to be legitimate. They are window dressing (Yang & Zheng, 2011). There is a difference between ceremonial adoption and thorough implementation (Yang & Zheng, 2011). For

instance, submitting the same AQM report as per the previous year is a practice that is de-coupled from institutional policy. Conducting student evaluations without giving students feedback on the actions taken in response to their comments on the student evaluation forms is also not in line with institutional policy. The consequences of de-coupling practices from institutional policy could be that the policies may not achieve the main purpose they were designed for or they may promote compliance and not improvement. The findings reveal that quality enhancement has not permeated fully into the practices of academics. The practices are implemented haphazardly for the sake of compliance without demonstrating a deep understanding of their pedagogical function (EI-Maghraby, 2011). In this study, preparing files for internal programme reviews is another example of de-coupling as according to academics there is no link between keeping a neat file and improvement in quality in teaching. Academics do not see the link between these practices and improvement in teaching, particularly with those practices enacted as a result of coercive pressure from the institution. They are cynical about some institutional policies related to quality. Furthermore, there is no evidence of practices such as researching teaching and learning, recognised in the institutional policies as ways of improving quality in teaching. Moreover, academics prioritise practices related to teaching demonstrating de-coupling from the institution as it focuses more on practices related to programme design.

With regard to conceptions, although the conceptions are isomorphic with institutional policy, one conception of quality could mean different things at different levels. The conception of quality as transformation offers one such example. According to academics, quality as transformation refers to what they do in the classroom which is de-coupled from the policy documents' interpretation of the notion of quality as transformation. Practices reported by academics linking to the notion of quality as transformation are asking students to do presentations in class, developing students' critical skills and staff upgrading of qualifications. The policy documents refer to quality as transformation meaning equity of access and redress. In the national context quality as transformation mainly means redressing imbalances of the past, demographics of staff, increasing access and success. In the classroom context as described by academics it means transforming and impacting positively on the student as an individual. The focus on redressing the imbalances of the past, indicate how the history of South Africa has informed how quality is conceptualised at national level. Academics demonstrate a de-coupling from that and focusing on transforming individuals more than transforming numbers.

Finally, the decoupling of structural subunits from one other was evident in the data as the study revealed tension and some disconnection between academics and the Quality Unit, between academics and the QPO and between academics and Senior Management at this campus.

9.6 Towards an isomorphic quality practices in teaching model

Taking into consideration the findings of this study and the theoretical explanations provided in this chapter, this study proposes a holistic, multi-level isomorphic quality practices in teaching model. The model makes explicit the relationship between policies, practices and conceptions of quality in teaching and learning in higher education. Figure 3 is a presentation of the model. It shows how the different levels relate to one other. The model is shaped as a *Q* to represent how quality permeates across the different levels from national to institutional and finally to individual level through various isomorphic pressures. Some reference is made to the global level as it has a strong influence in the pursuit of quality in teaching. The model proposed in this study, is presented first in a diagram form and thereafter it is explained.

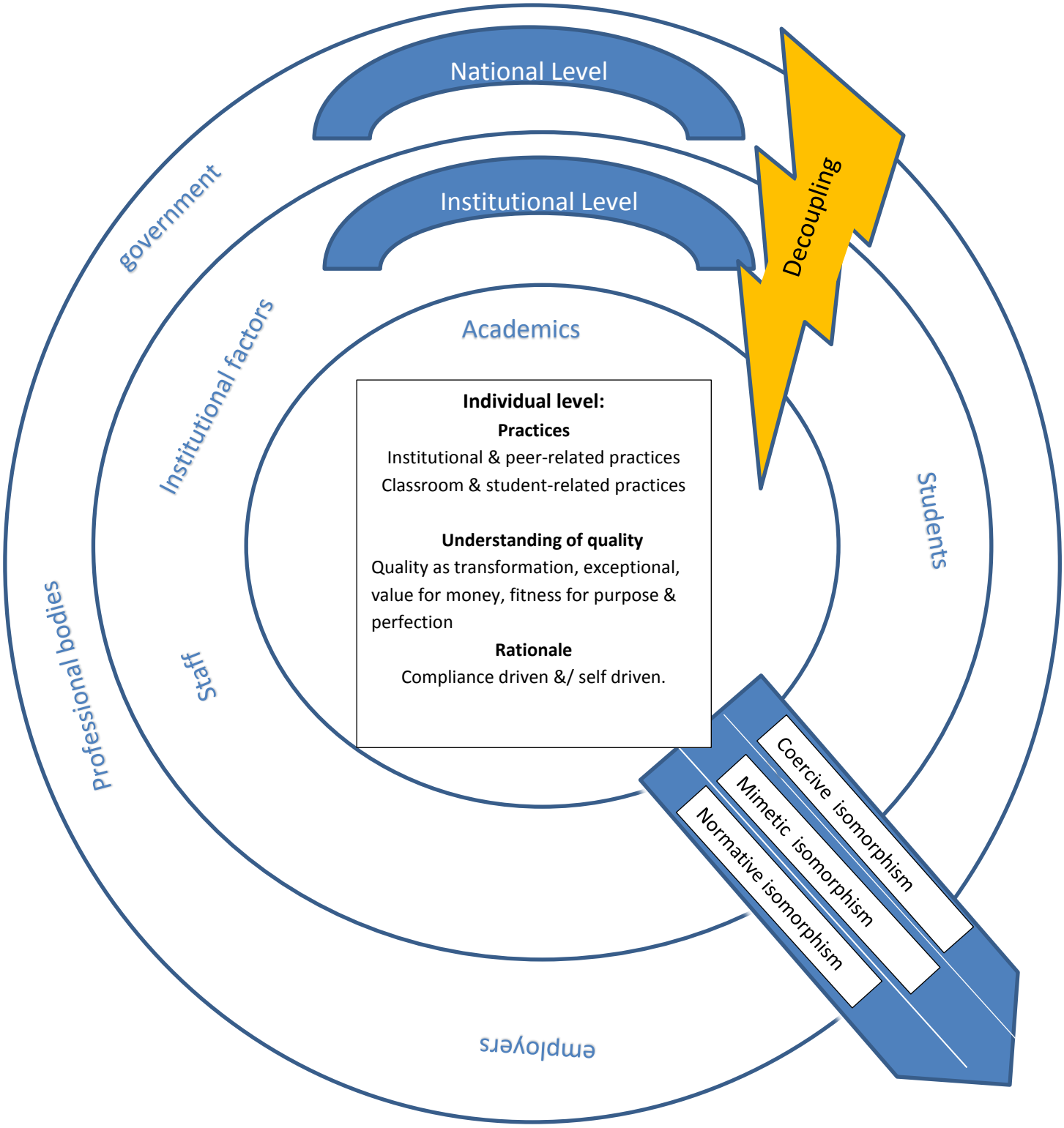

Figure 3: Quality practices in teaching model

The model can be used to better understand academics' quality practices in teaching in higher education institutions and can further assist in informing ways of improving quality in teaching. The model can contribute to extending focus on the role of academics' practices and the focus on conceptions of quality. The proposed model in this study could be used by academics on their own to understand their quality practices at a deeper level.

It can also be used as a way to expand the debate on quality and on issues dealing with professional development of academics. This holistic multi-level isomorphic quality practices in teaching model may be applicable to undergraduate teaching in Universities of Technology. There is a need to focus on quality in teaching in these new institutions in South Africa particularly since gaining university status and because of the low throughput rates across the sector. The voluntary self-driven practices should be elevated.

An explanation of the model

Drawing on neo-institutional theory as introduced in Chapter Two, the model is developed from what emerged in the literature, policies and from the data, as the *ingredients* (Kagondu & Marwa, 2017) of quality practices in teaching. The model shows how these *ingredients* relate to each other.

The model shows that quality practices arise from various policies and initiatives at different levels. Quality in teaching depends on national policies and initiatives, institutional policies and initiatives and academics' practices. As stated by Gvaramadze (2008, p. 451):

> *Quality is not a process initiated through sole evaluation and review procedures, but is rather a set of values and practices shared within the institutional community at different levels*

The model further represents conceptualisations of quality at different levels. The metaphor of a Russian doll (Blaxter, et al. 2006) where each level which has dolls of progressive sizes residing in other bigger ones separate but related, can explain this model. Each level has different characteristics but all levels are nested for the same purpose. The model further depicts how the different forces (as the tail of the Q) steer the quality agenda. The thesis pursued in this study is that the ingredients to quality in teaching can be in the form of the different levels as presented in Figure 3. The model represents the broader national level to the more specific level of academics and their practices.

National level – The outer layer is the national level which is external to the institution. It comprises the national government as well as employers and professional bodies as external stakeholders. Legislative frameworks to assure and enhance quality are designed at the national level. This level drives expected practices through various policies, legislation and various quality initiatives such as accreditations and institutional audits as discussed in Chapter Three. In addition, global quality initiatives inform the development of policies. The national level indicates what is to be prioritised by the sector and how quality is to be conceptualised in the country taking into consideration the national priorities. The national level further crafts quality criteria for institutions, to give direction on what is considered as quality in teaching and learning and applies these criteria during institutional audits and re-accreditations. The outcomes of the re-accreditations and institutional audits have serious consequences for the institutions.

Institution – The next layer is the institutional level. The institution internally introduces policies, often in line with external expectations driven by coercive forces. The institution does this in order to be legitimate, to survive and to obtain resources from the external environment. This level consists of staff and students as internal stakeholders. The institution further adopts conceptions of quality framed at national level. Coercive pressure is further exerted when institutional reports are made available publicly after a national quality initiative such as institutional audits (See section 3.3.2). This forces institutions to implement recommendations by the national body and to give feedback to the national body on the progress made.

Being uncertain of its identity, SAUT starts to mimic (some) policies and expected practices from the national, regional and global environment. The institution further mimics other institutions. To balance the scale between responding to isomorphic pressures and maintaining diversity, institutions further de-couple some of the policies from the national policies. Institutions can introduce their own policies and various initiatives aimed at assuring and enhancing quality in teaching, detailing what is expected from academics. It disconnects from the isomorphic forces with regard to some policies. For example in the case of UoTs, this could be in line with keeping the UoT-industry focussed mission whilst staying in harmony with national expectations. Disconnection could also occur by adopting other policies from other institutions around the globe. The nature or details of such foreign policies may be at odd with what is stated at national level. The institution can adopt its own polices or shift between the de-coupling and isomorphic continuum.

The level of individual academics is the center level. Once the policies have been developed at national and institutional level, the next level is the implementation of the policies by academics individually through their daily practices. At this level, academics engage in various practices in order to assure and enhance quality in teaching. There is an attempt to balance quality assurance and quality enhancement through practices. Practices could be driven by the institution or be self-driven by academics which make it a two-way process. The two broad categories of these practices can be institutional and peer related practices as well as classroom and student related practices. Practices could be as a result of coercive, mimetic and normative pressures, from the institution as well as from external forces or they could be from the willingness of academics to improve quality in teaching. At this stage there could be improvement of quality in teaching. Alternatively academics could ritualise and ceremonise practices in order to appear legitimate and to survive in academia thus responding to coercive pressures with no improvement. As discussed is Chapter Two, quality enhancement is more acceptable for academics than quality assurance (Bamber & Anderson, 2012).

The practices are informed by various elements such as compliance to policies in the institution, the internal motivation of an academic, the qualifications held by an academic, courses attended, experience of an academic; research relaed to quality in teaching; resources available; teaching workload as well as students in the classroom. The role of students in evaluating academics' quality practices is important. Students need to understand their role in enhancing quality practices of academics. Practices are also informed by the conceptions of quality held by academics. For instance, the notion of quality as transformation is the notion of quality which is closely related to teaching. The conception of quality as value for money is closely related to treating students and employers as customers. In addition, practices are informed by employers and professional bodies.

The practices of academics are enhanced or impeded by various factors related to the institution and to the national legislation. Practices are further enhanced or impeded by personal attributes such as personality, identity, attitudes towards students, attitudes towards quality and willingness to engage in quality practices. At this level, HoDs, Deans and the entire university management have crucial roles to play in shaping quality practices. All these factors frame the practices engaged by academics and further frame conceptions of quality adopted by academics. Hence, practices have policies, conceptions, factors and various isomorphic forces attached to them.

Practices can also be de-coupled from policy. De-coupling is represented in a zigzag shape in this model, to show the sometimes evident tension between policy and practice and the resultant separation or discord between the two. The practices can move between being de-coupled from institutional policy for personal reasons or because of being isomorphic with institutional policy. These two possibilities can end with or without improvement. Practices can also sit somewhere between isomorphism and de-coupling.

De-coupling from institutional policies and processes can also arise because of what academics hold closest to them, what they consider as priorities and how they relate to particular policies or processes related to quality. At this stage, academics' views and attitudes towards institutional processes should be considered. De-coupling can also result from how academics understand their roles in the profession regarding norms and standards of a particular profession and how they translate those into practice. De-coupling can be because of context and university teacher identity which might be different to how it is defined in the institution. It can also be in the form of structure where the different structures at institutional level and at academic level are delinked.

9.7 Contribution of the study

The information obtained from this study could assist in illuminating what academics consider as quality practices in teaching as well as in providing insights into how and why they relate (or do not relate) to institutional policy. Furthermore, the study contributes to understanding the nexus between national policy and institutional policy. It contributes to an understanding of the relationship between institutional policy and academics' practices. It further contributes to understanding the nexus between the conceptions of quality revealed in the policy documents with the conceptions of quality held by academics in a particular context and whether conceptions of quality held by academics have cascaded into practice. The study further contributes to the understanding of the nexus between academics and quality in higher education and what, according to academics, enhances and impedes quality in teaching. The study highlights factors affecting quality in teaching such as massification, workloads and under-preparedness of students. The study further brings attention to the role

of the various stakeholders in enhancing quality in teaching and it fills the gap found in the literature on what drives quality practices.

The purpose of the study was to explore quality practices in teaching by academics in a higher education institution as well as to ascertain what informs the practices and the views of academics regarding the quality practices they engage in. The study has encouraged academics to focus on their practices, thereby encouraging self-awareness amongst academics who were participants in this study. The study encourages focus on the voices of academics in a University of Technology context. Although the emphasis was on a South African University of Technology, the study makes an important contribution to academics, quality practitioners and decision makers in different higher education contexts by means of theorising the quality practices and conceptions of quality held by academics. The study further illuminates the views and concerns regarding policies and regarding enablers and enhancers of quality in teaching. The study could contribute towards adding on ways of overcoming concerns and impediments to quality. The university management could pay particular attention to impediments identified by academics and devise and monitor ways of dealing with them.

According to statistics, South Africa will soon be facing a critical shortage of academics. The average age of academics who are employed on a full time basis is above the age of 55 years (Council on Higher Education, 2015). This means that most experienced academics are due to retire soon. This looming shortage of academics could have a negative impact on quality as new and less experienced academics will be joining the sector. The practices of current academics need to be well documented at programme, department and faculty levels so that the next generation of academics can learn from and build on the good quality practices in teaching found in this study. They can also learn from what Mårtensoon, Roxå and Stensaker (2014) termed the taken-for-granted practices.

The study revealed that there are harmonies and disconnections between policy and practice related to quality in teaching. The findings from this study, should inform university management of the disconnections, disruptions and tensions between policy and practice particularly at implementation level. The study points to the predictors of policy adoption, which could assist policy developers in developing policies related to quality in teaching and learning. The findings indicate that if academics regard policies related to quality as not

adding any value to improving quality in teaching, they will be less likely to fully support those policies. This research could contribute towards devising ways for practice to inform policy and for improvement of policy and practice related to quality in teaching. The study highlights the support academics need to help avoid neglect of quality issues in teaching.

The study provides insights into the conceptualisation of quality at national level, institutional level and at the level of academics, with the aim of contributing to increasing the understanding of this concept in the higher education context. The study reveales that quality "like beauty lies in the eyes of the beholder" (Elassy, 2015) and therefore academics sometimes see quality differently as compared to how the institution conceptualizes quality. Another contribution is the use of neo-institutional theory in understanding the practices of academics in the higher education sector in light of the different levels.

Different higher education stakeholders will be made aware of the findings of the study through conference presentations and publications. This is so that there can be constant exploration of the relationship between academics and quality in teaching and constant evolution of ways of enhancing quality in various contexts. In this way input from all stakeholders in the design and implementation of policies and processes related to quality could be sought. Bottom up quality improvement initiatives could be acknowledged (Tadesse, 2014). A forum could be introduced at departmental level to share quality practices in teaching, adopting Mårtensson, et al's. (2014) description of quality practices as the continuous creation of meaning and value in daily practices. This could encourage a proactive and a collaborative approach to quality, allowing a focus on quality enhancement rather than quality assurance. The study advances the categories of quality practices in teaching. Furthermore, the study proposes the holistic, multilayered, isomorphic quality practices in teaching model which could be used to assist in understanding the various elements informing academics' quality practices.

The contributions of the study to research methodology is that the study used a qualitative case study approach to ascertain academics' quality practices, conceptions of quality as well as to ascertain the factors that can affect quality in teaching.

The study also expanded the use of neo-institutional theory to focus on blurred lines between coercive isomorphism and normative isomorphism as well as on the merits and demerits of de-coupling.

9.8 Recommendations

Taking into consideration the key findings of the study and theoretical explanations, the study proposes the following recommendations structured in three levels.

National level

To further enhance the focus on quality in teaching in the *third era* as described in Chapter Three, there should be increased attention to quality in teaching and to the practices of academic staff at national level in addition to the QEP project. Examples of such practices could be national teaching evaluations and national subject reviews as has been the case in Australia and China (The Australian Higher Education System, 2014; Jiang, 2015).

Conversations at national level should highlight prioritising teaching resources in addition to the current focus of prioritising quality in teaching and learning and developing the next generation of academics as discussed in Chapter Three. Various funding allocated to institutions should be through policies designed for prioritising teaching and learning resources to coincide with increasing enrolments.

Institutional level

Institutions should regularly evaluate their institutional policies. There should be a process for reviewing implementation and the effectiveness of the institutional policies and processes in improving quality in teaching. Thus institutions should ascertain whether the policies have been achieving the outcomes they were designed to achieve (Miller & McTavish, 2014). Involvement of academics in policy development, policy review as well as policy evaluation is important in order to enhance quality in teaching. This is taking into consideration that

policies could sometimes have intended and unintended consequences for practice as the findings in the study indicate in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight.

The findings in this study indicate that some academics are unaware of quality processes. Quality Units in various institutions should thus to implement more campaigns to make academic staff aware of the current quality processes required by the institution. The administration of institutional subject and lecturer evaluation forms should be included in institutional calendars, taking into consideration the finding that it is difficult for academics to schedule the administration of evaluation forms during teaching and learning events. Greater clarification on who is supposed to conduct these evaluations should be provided to avoid confusion. Increased attention should be given to promoting a self-driven quality culture to encourage academics to improve their practices. Another recommendation is that forms of evaluating teaching other than using standardised institutional subject evaluation forms in all faculties should be encouraged and supported. Academics could be provided the opportunity to decide on their own how they wish to evaluate quality in teaching as was expressed in Chapter Six. Existing quality initiatives at both national and institutional level should be supplemented by bottom up methods (Feigenbaum & Iqani, 2015). Quality should not be entirely in the hands of the Quality Units as the study found prominence of a top down approach. "Quality assurance regimes might not be as respectful of academic values as academics themselves could be if they were in charge" (Skolnik 2010, p. 9).

Departments should be encouraged to compile their own quality practices guide related to assuring and enhancing quality in teaching in their respective disciplines instead of waiting for the big stick (Quality Unit) as was described in this study.

Institutions should provide incentives for teachers to enhance their teaching (Biggs, 2001) in addition to the current teaching awards. The study's finding of a dominance of traditional lecture methods indicates there is a need for pedagogical training of academics at institutional level, particularly on using various methods of teaching to enhance quality in teaching. There should be an extended focus on staff development initiatives aimed at improving quality in teaching. There is a need for a course to sharpen academic's teaching skills in addition to the current formal qualifications in Higher Education Studies offered by various institutions in the country, as academics are not trained to be teachers. A similar model to that of Malaysia could be adopted where there is a Basic Teaching Methodology Course (BTMC) for

academics and participants in this course can be later observed to ensure that they apply what they have learnt in the BTMC course in their teaching (Deni, et al. 2014).

Academics reported that they feel alienated by management as described in Chapter Eight. There is a need for an intensive project focusing on analysing the various factors leading to this feeling and how this can be addressed.

The institution should ascertain employee expectations (Selesho, 2014) regularly with particular reference to teaching and the institutional quality processes. Increased attention to a visible link in the institutional policies regarding WIL and quality in teaching should be given. As articulated by participants in this study, increased attention needs to be given to processes for incorporating into teaching feedback from employers as captured in the WIL logbooks. Attention should be given to the use of the feedback obtained from students regarding quality in teaching and to the lack of usage of feedback as found in this study. It is recommended that there should be initiatives dealing with feedback obtained from students using student evaluation questionnaires. For instance, there could be support for academics who received negative feedback on their evaluations or there could be dismissal of university teachers who continually demonstrate ineffectiveness in teaching (Cardoso, et al. 2016). This is in line with the assertion that "enhancing academics as teachers … requires alignment among policies and practices involving human resource departments, academics, heads of departments, deans and teaching and learning division staff" (Council on Higher Education, 2015, p. 43)

Currently, excellent student evaluation results are only linked to promotion as described in Chapter Four. A regular individual one on one interview with the line manager (as suggested in this study) could assist in improving quality in teaching. More attention should be paid to giving feedback to academics on the solutions to issues raised in the AQM report because the study found that there is no feedback to academics after submission of AQM reports. There should be adequate and sufficient human and physical resources in all campuses including satellite campuses. The institution needs to relook at the workloads of academics to ascertain the impact of the current workloads on quality in teaching and devise means of allocating academics manageable workloads. Manageable workloads could assist in improving quality in teaching.

Individual level

Academics need to acknowledge that they have an important role in quality in teaching and student success. In a higher education context, academics need to be *self-motivated* rather than being externally motivated to implement quality practices as found in this study. Academic staff needs to implement their practices for improvement purposes rather than for mere compliance without improvement. Quality can be promoted through the motivation of academics (Cardoso, et al. 2016). Indeed Seema, Udam and Mattisen (2016) found that intrinsically motivated academics perceive quality evaluations more positively. Therefore a philosophy similar to that of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) in the US could be adopted. This belief is that quality rests with the commitment, the *will*, the integrity, and the actions of individuals (Plater, 2013). Therefore implementing the quality practices should be driven from within the individual academic (internally) instead of the current situation whereby isomorphic forces predominate. Many academics (not all) lack the energy to pursue quality in teaching (Mcinnis, 2000). Coercive, mimetic, normative pressures are inadequate to deal with improving quality, improving student success and retention of students in higher education. Academic staff that develop a personal interest in improving quality and in developing skills to question their own practices are to be lauded. This recognition should start at programme level. Academics striving for quality in teaching, irrespective of enabling or impeding environments are to be applauded.

Special attention needs to be paid to personal characteristics and traits of academics, particularly their attitudes towards quality and towards students. The study found an indication of a possible negative attitude of academics towards students. The attitude of academic staff towards students can impact on teaching and learning. Redmond, et al. (2008) echoed that the teacher's knowledge, skills and attitudes and the ways in which these are used to facilitate student learning are important. The attitudes of academics towards students as well as how academics view their role in higher education, should be considered. A positive attitude of the lecturer towards teaching can translate into enthusiasm and care about students (Goh, 1996) thus resulting in quality in teaching.

All academics should allocate time to reflect on their practices. If this is not encouraged, staff may not discover their weaknesses in their teaching and may become resistant to change

(Deni, et al. 2014). Reflection further encourages early identification of problem areas which could assist in putting in place means of overcoming those problems. Furthermore, academics should explore various teaching methods since teaching methods have become the main way to improve quality (Fang, 2017).

Self-initiated collaborations within the institution and with academics from different institutions with the aim of sharing quality practices in teaching should be encouraged. Academics who were participants in this study did not report researching their own practice. Hence, it is recommended that research on teaching as well as research on quality should form the focal point of enhancing quality in teaching. Research on quality in teaching should be one of the research focus areas in each discipline, in pursuit of enhancing the research culture. Research geared to the development and improvement of practice is central to quality (Ashcroft & Foreman-Peck, 1995).

9.9 Future research

Future research could include replicating the study in another context (another campus within the same institution, other faculties within the institution not included in the study, other higher education institutions within the same province, institutions in other provinces and other countries, another institutional type locally and internationally as well as private higher education institutions) to ascertain the transferability of the findings to different contexts.

Future research could focus on ascertaining the seriousness of the areas of concern arising from the study with regards to institutional quality processes such as internal programme reviews, student evaluations, online teaching and the AQM process.

An in-depth study on the impact of each institutional policy and process related to quality and staff development initiatives on teaching should be undertaken. Researching the effectiveness and impact of each practice on student success (considering the views of the different stakeholders) could add value to this research. A study ascertaining the impact of placements on quality in teaching should be undertaken. Dhunpath, et al. (2016) argues that a careful and thorough evaluation of work placements should be tracked rigorously. Future research could include ascertaining the impact of the current structure and culture on quality in teaching.

An in-depth exploration of the factors impacting quality in teaching and of the effects of resource limitations on quality is needed. There is a need for research on the effects of the three isomorphic forces on quality in teaching. This area could benefit from studying the effects of acceptable pass rates on quality in teaching.

This study only focused on the views of academics and did not include the views of students. The literature rarely explores the experiences of students and academics with quality assurance practices in teaching (Nobaho, et al. 2016). Future research could include how stakeholders (for example students and employers) conceptualise quality in a South African University of Technology context. Research is needed on possible conceptions of quality related to character and identity of each stakeholder.

Research is needed on the views of different stakeholders in different contexts on the issue of multilingual university classrooms as a means of enhancing quality in teaching.

The job satisfaction levels of academics, the satisfaction levels of employers, the satisfaction levels of students should be further explored. Furthermore, the stress levels as well as the motivators of academics in various contexts could also be explored.

Research is needed to ascertain academics' views on the relationship between research and teaching as one of the ways of enhancing quality in teaching.

There is a need for research to ascertain the prevalence of 'poor teaching' in universities, with a view of identifying ways in which such academics could be developed and supported.

Universities of Technology as organisations need to be studied in depth to establish how the isomorphic forces have shaped the identity of this new institutional type in South Africa.

Future research could apply the multi-level isomorphic Quality Practices Model proposed in this study as well as the Quality Practices Analytical Framework developed in this study to further explore quality issues.

Future research may also include an evaluation of the application of the model as well as the evaluation of the application of the Quality Practices Analytical Framework developed in this study.

I end this dissertation with this quote to stimulate future projects in this area:

> *We are looking for quality. Students are looking for quality; lecturers are looking for quality; we are looking for quality teaching* (Edith)

REFERENCES

Acer, K. & Güçlü,N. (2017). An analysis of the expansion of higher education in Turkey using the new institutional theory. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, 17 (6) 1911-1933.

Ada, S., Baysal, N. & Erkan, S, S, S. (2017). An evaluation of service quality in higher education: Marmara and Niğde Omer Halisdemir Universities'. Universal Journal of Educational Research, 5(11) 2057-2065. Retrieved from http:www.hrpub.org.. doi: 10.13189/ujer.2017.051122.

Aggelogiannopoulos, D., Drosinos, E. H. & Athanasopoulos, P. (2007). Implementation of a Qualtiy Management System (QMS) according to the ISO 9000 Family in a Greek small-sized winery: A case study. *Food Control*, 18 (9), 1077-1085. Retrieved from www.sciencedirect.com website: doi:10.1016/j.foodcont.2006.7.010.

Akalu, G, A. (2016). Higher education 'massification' and challenges to the professoriate: do academics' conceptions of quality matter? *Quality in Higher Education*, 22 (3), 260-276. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com Doi: 10.1080/13538322.20161266230.

Akoojee, S. & Nkomo, M. (2007). Access and quality in South African higher education: the twin challenges of transformation. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 21(3), 385-399.

Anderson, J. E. (2003). *Public policy making: An introduction* (Third edition ed). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. Retrieved from www.kropfpolisci.com.

Anderson, G. (2006). Assuring quality/ resisting quality assurance: Academics's responses to quality in some Australian universities. *Quality in Higher Education*, 12(2), 161-173.

Arar, K. (2016). Using insider research in MEd final projects to bridge the theory/practice gap. *International Journal of Leadership in Education. Theory and Practice*, 21 (4) 462-478. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi: 10.1080/13603124.2016.1157210.

Ashcroft, K. & Foreman-Peck, L. (1995). The lecturer's guide to quality and standards in colleges and universities. London: The Falmer Press.

Ashworth, A. & Harvey, R. (1994). *Assessing quality in further and higher education.* London and Bristol, Pennyslavania: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Austin, A. E. & Sorcinelli, M. D. (2013). The future of faculty development: where are we going? *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, 2013(133), 85-97. Retrieved from www.wileyonlinelibrary.com website: doi:10.1002/tl.20048.

Australian Government. (2014). Office for Learning and Teaching. *Australian University Teaching Criteria and Standards Project*. Retrieved from www.uniteachingcriteria.edu.au.

Avci, E. (2017). Drawing on other disciplines to define quality bioethics education. *Quality in Higher Education*, 23(3), 201-212. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi 10.1080/13538322.2017.1407394.

Badat, S. (2009). *The role of higher education in society: Valuing higher education*. Paper presented at the HERS-SA Academy 2009, South Africa, Cape Town. www.ru.ac.za.

Badenhorst, C. (2008). *Dissertation writing. A research journey*. Cape Town: Van Schaik.

Badsha, N. & Cloete, N. (2011). Higher Eduation: Contribution for the NPC's National Development Plan. Retrieved from http://www.chet.org.za/papers/higher-education-contribution-npc%E2%80%99s-national-development-plan.

Ballim, Y., Mabizela, S. & Mubangizi, J. (2014). Professional bodies and quality assurance of higher education programmes in South Africa: Towards an appropriate framework. *South African Journal of Higher Education, 28*(4), 1140-1155.

Baloyi, M. C. & Phago, K. G. (2012). Structural functional analysis of Tshwane University of Technology: Post merger implications. *South African Journal of Higher Education, 26*(5), 873-890.

Bamber, V. & Anderson, S. (2012). Evaluating learning and teaching: Institutional needs and individual practices. *International Journal for Academic Development, 17*(1), 5-18. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi:10.1080/1360144X.2011.586459.

Basit, T., Eardley, A. & Borup, R. (2015). Higher education institutions and work-based learning in the UK: employer engagement within a tripartite relationship. *Higher Education*, 70 (6), 1003-1015. Retrieved from www.ebscohost.com doi:10.1007/s10734-015-9877-7.

Berquist, W. H. (1995). *Quality through access, access with quality. The new imperative for higher education*. United States: The Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series.

Bertram, C. & Christiansen, I. (2014). *Understanding research. An introduction to reading research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Best, S. (2012). *Understanding and doing successful research. Data collection and analysis for the social sciences*. England: Pearson Education Limited.

Bester, M. & Scholtz, D. (2012). Mapping our way to coherence, alignment and responsiveness. *South African Journal of Higher Education,* 36(2), 282-299.

Biggs, J. (1999). *Teaching for quality learning at university*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Biggs, J. (2001). The reflective institution: Assuring and enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. *Higher Education,* 41 (3), 221-238. Retrieved from www.jstor.org.

Biggs, J. (2012). What the student does: Teaching for enhanced learning. *Higher Education Research and Development, 31*(1), 39-55. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi:10.1080/07294360.2012.642839.

Biggs, N. (2010). *Toxic teaching*: *The American Music Teacher 60*(2), 23-25. Retrieved from https://search.proquest.com.

Biputh, B. (2008). *An investigation of educator's perceptions of the Integrated Quality Management System in South African Schools*. Unpublished DTech thesis. Durban University of Technology. Retrieved from http://ir.dut.ac.za.

Blackmore, J. (2004). Quality assurance rather than quality improvement in higher education? *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 25*(3), 383-394. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi:10.80/0142569042000217016.

Blackmore, J. (2009). Academic pedagogies, quality logics and performative universities: evaluating teaching and what students want. *Studies in Higher Education,* 34(8), 857-872. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi:10.1080/03075070902898664.

Blackmore, J. (2010). Quality assurance rather than quality improvement in higher education? *British Journal of Sociology of Education,* 25(3), 383-394. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com website: doi:10.1080/0142569042000217016.

Blanco-Ramirez, G. & Berger, J. (2014). Rankings, accreditation, and the international quest for quality. Organizing an approach to value in higher education. *Quality Assurance in Education, 22*(1), 88-104. Retrieved from www.emeraldinsight.com doi:10.1108/QAE-07-2013-0031.

Blaxter, L., Hughes, C. & Tight, M. (2006). *How to research*. 3rd ed. New York:Open University Press.

Bloxham, S., Hughes, C. & Adie, L. (2015). What is the point of moderation? A discussion of the purposes achieved through contemporary moderation practices. *Assessment and*

Evaluation in Higher Education, 41(4), 1-16. Retrieved from www.ebscohost.com doi:10.1080/023602938.2015.1039932.
Bolldèn, K. (2016a). Teachers' embodied presence in online teaching practices. *Studies in Continuing Education*, 38 (1), 1-15. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0158037X.2014.988701.
Bolldèn, K. (2016b). The emergence on online teaching practices: a socio-material analysis. *Learning, Media and Technology*, 41 (3), 444-462. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17439884.2015.1044536.
Borden, V. M. H. (2011). Accountability for student learning. Views from inside out and outside in. *Alternation*, 18(2), 317-342. Retrieved from alternation.ukzn.ac.za.
Botha, J., Favish, J. & Stephenson, S. (2008). Institutional Audits: A comparison of the experiences of three South African Universities. Q*uality in Higher Education*, 4(1), 29-53.
Boud, D. & Associates. (2010). Assessment 2020. *Seven propositions for assessment reform in higher education*. Retrieved from www.assessmentfutures.com.
Boughey, C. (2004). Higher Education in South Africa: context, mission and legislation. In S. Gravett & H. Geyser (Eds.) *Teaching and learning in higher education* (pp. 1-21). Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
Boughey, C (2007). Marrying equity and efficiency. The need for third generation academic development. *Perspectives in Education*, 25(3), 1-11. Retrieved from www.researchgate.net. Date accessed 30 June 2016.
Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3* (2), 77-101. Retrieved from www.qualresearchpsych.com doi: 10.1191/1478088706qp0630a.
Brockx, B., Van Roy, K. & Mortelmans, D. (2012). The student as a commentator: Students' comments in student evaluations of teaching. *Procedia: Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 69 (2012), 1122-1133. Retrieved from www.sciencedirect.com doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.12.04.
Brown, R. (2012). Quality assurance 1992-2012. *Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher Education, 16*(4), 113-117. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi:10.1080/13603108.2011.599882.
Brown, V. J. K. (2010). *How academics respond to the introduction of new quality processes in South Africa.* (Unpublished PhD thesis), University of Pretoria. Retrieved from https://repository.up.ac.za.
Burton, D. & Bartlett, S. (2009). *Key Issues for Educational Researchers*. London: SAGE.
Bush, T. (2011). *Theories of educational leadership and management* (4th ed.). London: SAGE.
Cao, L. (2017). A new evaluation index system of the assessment of higher education in China. *Revisista de la Facultad de Ingenieria U.C.V*, 32(8) 325-331.
Cardoso, S., Rosa, M. J. & Santos, C. S. (2013). Different academics' characteristics, different perceptions on quality assessment? *Quality Assurance in Education*, 21(1), 96-117. Retrieved from www.emeraldinsight.com doi:10.1108/09684881311293089.
Cardoso, S., Rosa, M. J. & Stensaker, B. (2016). Why is quality in higher education not achieved? The view of academics. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 41(6), *950-965*. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com. doi:10.1080/02602938.2015.1052775.
Cardoso, S., Tavares, O. & Sin, C. (2015). The quality of teaching staff: higher education institutions compliance with the European standards and guidelines for quality assurance - the case of Portugal. *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and*

Accountability, 27(3), 205-222. Retrieved from www.researchgate.net. doi:10.1007/s11092-015-9211-z.
Castle, J. (2013). I had no time to bleed "Heroic journeys of PhD students in a South African School of Education, *Journal of Education, 57 (2013)*, 1-24.
Chen, C., Chen, P. & Chen, P. (2014). Teaching Quality in Higher Education: An introductory review on a process-oriented teaching-quality model. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*, *25*(1-2), 36-56. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi:10.1080/14783363.2011.637789.
Cheng. M (2009). Academic professionalism and quality mechanisms: Challenges and tensions. Q*uality in Higher Education, 15*(3), 193-205.
Cheng. M (2011) The perceived impact of quality audit on the work of academics. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 30(2), 179-191. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi 10.1080/07294360.2010.509764.
Cheng, M. (2014). Quality as transformation: Educational metamorphosis. *Quality in Higher Education, 20*(3), 272-289. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi:10.1080/13538322.2014.978135.
Cheung, P. P. T. & Tsui, C. B. S. (2010). Quality assurance for all. *Quality in Higher Education, 16*(2), 169-171. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi:10.1080/13538322.2010.485723.
Chew, S. (2007). Designing effective examples and problems for teaching statistics. In D. Dunn, R. Smith & B. Beins (Eds.), *Best practices for teaching and research methods in the Behavioural Sciences* (pp. 73-91). London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
Chitanand, N. (2015). Developing new academics: So what difference does it make? *International Journal of Social, Education, Economics and Management Engineering, 9*(2), 386-392. Retrieved from http://ir.dut.ac.za.
Cloete, N. (2014). The South African higher education system: Performance and policy. *Studies in Higher Education, 39*(8), 1355-1368. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi:10.1080/03075079.2014.949533.
Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2009). *Research Methods in Education*. New York: Routledge.
Colleen, L. (1999). *Managing Quality and standards. Managing Universities and Colleges. Guides to good practice*. Buckingham, Philadelphia: Open University Press.
Connelly, L, M. (2015). Focus groups. *Medsurg Nursing*, 24(5), 369-370. Retrieved from https:search.proquest.com.
Cooke, L. A., Naidoo, D. & Sattar, K. (2010). External Regulation and the Universities of Technology. *Universities of Technology-Deepening the Debate, Kagisano no 7*, 145-163. Retrieved from www.che.ac.za.
Corder, M., Horsburgh, M. & Melrose, M. (1999). Quality monitoring, innovation and transformative learning. *Journal of Further and Higher Education, 23*(1), 101-108. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi:10.1080/0309877990230108.
Council on Higher Education (CHE). Higher Education Quality Committee (2001a). *Founding Document*. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education.
Council on Higher Education (CHE). (2001b). A *Framework for Improving Teaching and Learning Project*. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education. Retrieved from www.che.ac.za.
Council on Higher Education. Higher Education Quality Committee. (CHE) (2003), *MBA Re-accreditation Manual*. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education. Retrieved from: www.che.ac.za.
Council on Higher Education (CHE). (2004a). *Criteria for Programme Accreditation*. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education. Retrieved from www.che.ac.za.

Council on Higher Education (CHE). (2004b). *Criteria for Institutional Audits*. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education. Retrieved from www.che.ac.za.
Council on Higher Education (CHE). (2004c). *Improving Teaching and Learning Resources*. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education. Retrieved from: www.che.ac.za.
Council on Higher Education (CHE). (2004d). *The State of Provision of the MBA in South Africa*. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education. Retrieved from www.che.ac.za.
Council on Higher Education (CHE). (2006). *Criteria and Minimum Standards for BEd* Pretoria: Council on Higher Education. Retrieved from www.che.ac.za.
Council on Higher Education (CHE). Higher Education Quality Committee (2008). Self-review report. October. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education. Retrieved from www.che.ac.za.
Council on Higher Education (CHE). (2009). *External Evaluation of the Higher Education Quality Committee of the Council on Higher Education*. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education. Retrieved from www.che.ac.za.
Council on Higher Education (CHE). (2010a). Teaching and Lerning Beyond Formal Access. Assessment through the Looking Glass. Higher Education Monitor No 10. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education.
Council on Higher Education (CHE). (2010b). *Report on the National Reviews of Academic and Professional Programmes in Education*. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education. Retrieved www.che.ac.za.
Council on Higher Education (CHE). (2011a). *Framework for Second Cycle of Quality Assurance 2012-2017. Consultation document*. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education. Retrieved from www.che.ac.za.
Council on Higher Education (CHE). (2011b). *Work Integrated Learning Good Practice Guide*. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education: Retrieved from www.che.ac.za.
Council on Higher Education (CHE). (2013). *Framework for Qualification Standards*. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education. Retrieved from www.che.ac.za.
Council on Higher Education (CHE). (2013). *Vital Stats 2013 Public Higher Education*. Pretoria: Council on Higer Education. Retrieved from www.che.ac.za.
Council on Higher Education (CHE). (2014). *Framework for Institutional Quality Enhancement in the Second Period of Quality Assurance*. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education. Retrieved from www.che.ac.za.
Council on Higher Education (CHE). (2015). *Vital Stats 2015 Public Higher Education*. Pretoria: Council on Higer Education. Retrieved from www.che.ac.za.
Council on Higher Education (CHE). (2015). *Content Analysis of the Baseline Institutional Submissions for Phase One of the QEP Project Institutional Audits Directorate*. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education. Retrieved from www.che.ac.za.
Council on Higher Education (CHE). (2017). *Outcomes of the National Review of the Bachelor of Laws (LLB) qualification*. Council on Higher Education. Retrieved from www.che.ac.za.
Cousin, G. (2009). *Researching Learning in higher education: An introduction to contemporary methods and approaches*. New York: Routledge: Taylor and Francis.
Craswell, G. (2005). *Writing for academic success. A postgraduate guide*. London: SAGE.
Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research. Planning conducting and evaluating. quantitative and qualitative research* (International edition Fourt Edition ed.). Boston: Pearson.
Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (Third ed.). London: SAGE.
Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design. Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. International student edition. (4th ed.). London: SAGE.

Crossman, J. & Burdett, J. (2012). Matters arising. Australian University quality agency feedback in relation to the academic engagement of international students enrolled in onshore university programmes. Q*uality in Higher Education, 18*(2), 221-234. Retrieved from doi:10.1080/13538322.2012.667264.

Cuban, L. (2013). Why so many structural changes in schools and so little reform in teaching practice? *Journal of Educational Administration, 51*(2), 109-125. Retrieved from www.emeraldinsight.com doi:10.1108/09578231311304661.

Daud, S., Mustafa, Z., Suradi, N. R. M., Ariffin, A. K., Bakar, N. R. A. & Ramli, R. (2011). Compliance to thesis examination procedure in the ISO Quality Management System for teaching and learning. *Procedia: Social and Behavioral Sciences, 18*, 18-23. Retrieved from www.sciencedirect.com doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.05.004.

De Clerq, F (2008). Teacher quality appraisal and development: The flaws in the IQMS. *Perspectives in Education*. 26(1), 7-8. Retrieved from www.sabinet.co.za.

De Vos, A. S., Strydom, H., Fouche, C. B. & Delport, C. S. L. (2011). *Research at grass roots for the Social Sciences and Human Services Professions*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Deni, A. R. M., Zainal, Z. I. & Malakolunthu, S. (2014). Improving teaching in higher education in Malaysia: Issues and challenges. *Journal for Further and Higher Education*, 38(5), 656-673. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi:10.1080/0309877X.2013.831037.

Department of Education (DoE). (2002). *Language Policy for Higher Education*. Pretoria: Ministry of Education. Retrieved from www.education.gov.za.

Department of Education (DoE). (1997). *Education White Paper 3. A programme for Transformation of Higher Education*. Pretoria: Department of Education. Retrived from www.education.gov.za

Department of Higher Education and Training, (DHET). (2011). *Statistics on Post-School Education and Training in South Africa*. Retrieved from www.dhet.gov.za.

Department of Higher Education and Training, (DHET) (2013). *White paper for post-school education and training. Building an expanded effective and integrated post-school system*. Retrieved from www.dhet.gov.za.

Department of Higher Education and Training, (DHET) (2015). *Staffing South Africa's Universities Framework. Revitalising and Transforming the Academic Profession*. *A Comprehensive, Transformative Approach to Developing Future Generations of Academics and Building Staff Capacity*. Retrieved from www.justice.gov.za

Dew, J. (2009). Quality Issues in higher education. *The Journal for Quality and Participation, 32*(1), 4-9. Retrieved from https://media.proquest.com.

Dhunpath, R., Amin, N. & Msibi, T. (2016). Editorial: Can Policy Learn from Practice? *Alternation, 23*(1), 1-4. Retrieved from http://utlo.ukzn.ac.za. doi 10.3102/01623737012004433.

DiMaggio, P.J. & Powell, W.W. (1983). The iron cage revisited: Institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields. *American Sociological Review* 48(2) 147-160. Retrieved from www.jstor.com doi 10.2307/2095101.

Dongwe, C. K. (2013). *Quality practices in teaching by academics in higher education.* Proceedings Higher Education Learning and Teaching Association of Southern Africa (HELTASA). Higher Education in a Shifting Landscape: emergence fragmentation and convergence. 27-29 November 2013. UNISA, South Africa, Pretoria.

Douglas, J. & Douglas, A. (2006). Evaluating teaching quality. *Quality in Higher Education, 12*(1), 3-13.

Du Prè, R. (2009). *The place and role of Universities of Technology in South Africa.* Durban: Durban University of Technology.

Du Prè, R. (2010). Universities of Technology in the Context of the South African Higher Education Landscape. *Universities of Technology-Deepening the Debate, Kagisano no 7*, 1-41. Retrieved from www.che.ac.za.

Dube, L. (2011). Quality assurance and practices in university libraries in South Africa. *South African Journal of Library and Information Science, 77*(1), 26-36. Retrieved from uir.unisa.ac.za. doi 10.7553/77-1-64.

Dumakude, V. J. (2008). *A policy analysis of the implementation of the Intergrated Quality Management System (IQMS) in six secondary schools in KwaZulu-Natal.* (Unpublished Master of Social Science thesis), University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

Ehlers, U. D. (2009). Understanding quality culture. *Quality Assurance in Education, 17*(4), 343-363. Retrived from www.emeraldinsight.com. doi 10.1108/09684880910992322.

EI-Maghraby, H. (2011). *Quality Assurance in newly established universities in Saudi Arabia*. Paper presented at the Biannual conference. AL Joulf University. www.anqahe.org.

Elassy, N. (2015). The concepts of quality, quality assurance and quality enhancement. *Quality Assurance in Education, 23*(3), 250-261. Retrieved from www.emeraldinsight.com doi:10.1108/QAE-11-2012-0046.

ENQA. (2009). *ENQA report on standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European higher education area*. Helsinki, Finland. Retrieved from www.enqa.eu

Essack , S. Y., Naidoo, I., Oosthuizen, F., Bodenstein, J., Brysiewicz, P. & Suleman, F. (2012). Quality teaching and learning in the Health Sciences. *South African Journal of Higher Education, 26*(5), 960-972.

Essack, S. Y., Wedekind, V. & Naidoo, I. (2012). Selection tools predictive of success in health sciences. NATED vs NSC students. *South African Journal of Higher Education, 26*(3), 472-486.

European University Association. (2006). *Quality culture in European universities: A bottom up approach. Report on the three rounds of the quality culture project 2002-2006*. Brussels. Retrieved from www.eua.be.

Ewell, P. (2010). Twenty years of quality assurance in higher education: what happened and what's is different? Q*uality in Higher Education, 16*(2), 173-175. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com. doi 10.1080/13538322.2010.485728.

Fang, A. (2017). Innovation of university teaching methods and improvement of higher education quality based on AHP, *Revista de la Faulttad de Ingenieria UCV* 32(13) 172-176.

Feigenbaum, A. & Iqani, M. (2015). Quality after the cuts? Higher education practitioners' accounts of systemic challenges to teaching quality in times of austerity. *Journal for Further and Higher Education, 39*(1), 46-66. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com website: doi:10.80/0309877X.2013.778961.

Filippakou, O. & Tapper, T. (2008). Quality assurance and quality enhancement in higher education: Contested territories. *Higher Education Quarterly, 62*(1), 84-100.

Filippakou, O. (2011). The idea of quality in higher education: A conceptual approach *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education, 32*(1), 15-28. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi:10.1080/01596306.2011.537068.

French, E., Summers, J., Kinash, S., Lawson, R., Taylor, T., Herbert, J., Fallshaw, E., Hall, C. (2014). The practice of quality in assuring learning in higher education. Q*uality in Higher Education, 20*(1), 24-43. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi:10.1080/13538322.2014.889432.

Garwe, E. C. (2012, August). *Quality assurance challenges and opportunities faced by private universities in Zimbabwe*. Paper presented at the The 10th Annual Conference on private education, Addis Ababa Ethopia. August 7-8.

Geda, A.G (2014) *Quality assurance policy and practice in higher education institutions in Ethiopia*. (Unpublished thesis Doctor of Education). University of South Africa. Retrieved from www.netd.ac.za.

Geyser, H. (2004a). Learning from assessment. In S. Gravett & H. Geyser (Eds.), *Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* (pp. 90-110). Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Geyser, H. (2004b). Programme development and curriculum design perspective. In S. Gravett & H. Geyser (Eds.), *Teaching and learning in higher education* (pp. 139-156). Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Ghonji, M., Khosnodifar, Z., Hosseini, S. M. & Mazloumzadeh, S. M. (2015). Analysis of some effective teaching factors within faculty members of agricultural and natural resources colleges in Tehran University. *Journal of the Saudi Society of Agricultural Sciences,* 14 (2), 109-115. Retrieved from www.sciencedirect.com. doi:10.1016/j.jssas.2013.04.003.

Gidley, J. M., Hampson, G. P., Wheeler, L. & Bereded-Samuel, E. (2010). From access to success: An intergrated approach to quality higher education informed by social inclusion theory and practice. *Higher Education Policy, 23 (1),* 123-147. Retrieved from www.researchblank.rmit doi:10.1057/hep.2009.24.

Goh, T. N. (1996). A framework for quality assurance in teaching. *Total Quality Management, 7*(2), 183-188. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi:10.1080/09544129650034936.

Goldkuhl, G. (2012). Pragmatism vs interpretivism in qualitative information systems research. *European Journal of Information Systems*, 21 (2), 135-146. Retrieved from www.palgrave-journals.com doi 10.057/ejis.2011.54.

Govender, C.M. & Wait, M. (2017). Work integrated learning benefits for student career prospects –mixed mode analysis. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 31(5). 49-64.

Gray, D. E. (2014). *Doing research in the real world* (Third ed.). New Delhi, Singapore, Washington DC: SAGE.

Grayson, D. (2014, June). *The quality enhancement project: A systematic intervention for improving teaching and learning*. Paper presented at the ICED Conference Educational Development in a Changing World, Stockholm, Sweden. 16-18 June.

Grbich, C. (2013). *Qualitative data analysis. An introduction* (Second ed.). Los Angeles, London.

Green, P. E. (2013). *A systems approach to the evaluation of an academic department as a service provider at a University of Technology.* (Unpublished PhD thesis), University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

Gumede, D, C. (2014). *The challenges of working and studying at a satellite campus: A case study of the Riverside Campus of the Durban University of Technology*. (Unpublished DTech thesis). Durban University of Technology, Durban.

Gvaramadze, I. (2008). From quality assurance to quality enhancement in the European higher education era. *European Journal of Education, 43*(4), 443-455. Retrieved from http://web.b.ebscohost.com.

Gwynne-Evans, A. & English, J (2014). Changes in teaching professional skills, including ethics, within an engineering faculty's skills development unit, *South African Journal of Higher Education*, *28*(1), 110-127. Retrieved from www.reference.sabinet.co.za.

Hammonds, F., Mariano, G.J., Ammons, G. & Chambers, S. (2017). Student evaluations of teaching: improving teaching quality in higher education. *Perspectives: Policy and*

Practice in Higher Education, 21(1), 26-33. Retrieved from www. tandfonline.com doi: 10.1080/13603108.2016.1227388.
Harell, M. C. & Bradley, M. A. (2009). *Data collection methods. Semi-structured interviews and focus groups*. Prepared for the US Government in Santa Monica: National Defense Research Institute, Rand Corporation.
Harvey, L. & Green, D. (1993). "Defining quality" *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, *18*(1), 8-35.
Harvey, L. (1997). Quality is not free! Quality monitoring alone will not improve quality. *Tertiary Education and Management, 3*(2), 133-143. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi:10.1080/13583883.1997.9966916.
Harvey, L. & Williams, J. (2010a). Fifteen years of quality in higher education. Q*uality in Higher Education*, *16*(1), 3-36.
Harvey, L. & Williams, J. (2010b). Fifteen years of quality in higher education (Part Two). Editorial. Q*uality in Higher Education, 16*(2), 81-113.
Harwell, M. (2011). Research Design in Qualitative/Quantitative/Mixed Methods. In C. F. Conrad & R. C. Serlin (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook for Research in Education. Pursuing Ideas as the Keystone of Exemplary Inquiry* (pp. 147-163). London: SAGE.
Haseena, V. A. & Mohammed, A. P. (2015). Aspects of quality in education for the improvement of educational scenario. *Journal of Education and Practice, 6*(4), 100-105. Retrieved from http://files.eric.ed.gov.
Havenga, R. (2000). *A critical examination of the Graduate Assistant scholarship programme at Technikon Natal as a staff development mechanism.* (Unpublished Masters in Education thesis: Tertiary Education), University of Natal, Durban.
Hay, H. R. & Herselman, M. E. (2001). An investigation into the perceptions of academic staff on quality assurance in teaching and learning at selected South African universities. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, *15*(3), 131-141.
Healey, M. (2012). Promoting the scholarship of academic development: tensions between institutional needs and individual practices. *International Journal for Academic Development*, *17*(1), 1-3. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi:10.1080/1360144X.2012.646519.
Hearn, S. & White, N. (2009). Communities of Practice: Linking Knowledge Policy and Practice. *ODI Background Note*. Retrieved from www.odi.org.uk.
Hemer, S. R. (2014). Finding time for quality teaching: an ethnographic study of academic workloads in the Social Sciences and their impact on teaching practices. *Higher Education Research and Development, 33*(3), 483-495. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi:10.1080/07294360.2013.841647.
Hèrnard, F. & Roseveare, D. (2012). Fostering quality teaching in higher education: Policies and Practices. *An IMHE Guide for Higher Education Institutions. Instititutional Management in Higher Education*. Retrieved from www.oecd.org.
Hibbers, T. D. (2006). *The Integrated QualityManagement System in Education*. (Unpublished Masters Degree Education Management) University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg.
Hlalele, D. & Alexander, G. (2012). University access, inclusion and social justice. *South African Journal of Higher Education, 26*(3), 487-502.
Holloway, I. & Brown, L. (2012). *Essentials of a Qualitative Doctorate*. California: Left Coast Press.
Hoskins, S. & Newstead, S. (2009). Encouraging student motivation. In H. Fry, S. Ketteridge & S. Marshall (Eds.), *A handbook for teaching and learning in higher education. Enhancing academic practice* (3rd ed) (pp. 27-39). New York and London: Routledge and Taylor and Francis Group.

Houghton, C., Casey, D., Shaw, D., Murphy, K. (2013). Rigour in qualitative case-study research. *Nurse Researcher*, 20(4), 12-17. Retrieved from www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23520707

Houston, D. (2008). "Rethinking quality and improvement in higher education". *Quality Assurance in Education, 16*(1), 61-79. Retrieved from www.emeraldinsight.com doi:10.1108/09684880810848413.

Houston, D. & Paewai, S. (2013). Knowledge power and meanings shaping quality assurance in higher education. A systematic critique. *Quality in Higher Education,* 19(3), 261-282.

Huizinga, T., Handelzalts, A., Nieveen, N., & Voogt, J. (2014). Teacher involvement in curriculum design: need for support to enhance design experience. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 46(1), 33-57. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi:10.1080/00220272.2031.834077.

Idoniboye-Obu. (2015). *Corruption in higher education in Nigeria: Prevalence, structures and patterns among students of higher education institutions in Nigeria.* (Unpublished PhD thesis), University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

Jabareen, Y. T. & Vilkomerson, R. (2014). Public policy in divided societies: the role of policy institutions in advancing marginalized groups. *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research, 27*(1), 46-66. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi:10.1080/13511610.2013.777274.

Jacobs, D. J. (2000). A future quality assurance scenario for South African higher education. *South African Journal of Higher Education,* 16(2) 69-74.

Jansen, J. D. (2002). Political symbolism as policy craft: Explaining non-reform in South African education after apartheid. *Journal of Education Policy,* 17(2), 199-215. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi:10.1080/026809301101116534.

Jarvis, P. (2001). *Universities and corporate universities. The higher learning industry in global society*. London: Kogan Page.

Jarvis, D, S.L. (2014). Policy transfer, neo-liberalsim or coercive institutional ismorphism? Exlaining the emergence of a regulatory regime for quality assurance in the Hong Kong higher educatin sector. *Policy and Society,* 33(3) *237-252.* Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi 10.1016/j.polsoc.201409003.

Jiang, K. (2015). Undergraduate teaching evaluation in China: Progress and debate. International Higher Education. 58, 15-17. Retrieved from https://ejournals.bc.edu.

Jibladze, E. (2013). Running around in cricles: quality assurance reforms in Georgia. Q*uality in Higher Education, 19*(3), 343-357. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi:10.1080/13538322.2013.850859.

Johnson, B. & Christensen, L. (2012). *Educational Research. Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed Approaches* (4th ed.). Los Angeles: SAGE.

Jones, J. & De Saram, D. (2005). Academic staff views of quality systems for teaching and learning: A Hong Kong case study. *Quality in Higher Education,* 11(1), 47-58. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com. doi:10.1080/13538320500074899

Jones, S. (2014). Student participation in dual enrolment and college success. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice,* 38(1), 24-37. Retrieved from doi:10.080/10668926.2010.532449.

Kadhila, N. (2012). *Quality Assurance Mechanisms in Higher Education Institutions in Namibia.* (Unpublished PhD Thesis), University of Free State. Retrieved from www.ufs.ac.za.

Kagondu, R. & Marwa, S.M. (2017). Quality issues in Kenya's higher education institutions. *JHEA/RESA, Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa,* 15(1). 23-42. Retrieved from www.jstor.org.

Kalayci, N., Watty, K & Hayirsever, F (2012). Perceptions of quality in higher education: A comparative study of Turkish and Australian Business academics. *Quality in Higher Education*, 18(2), 149-167.

Kanji, G. K., Tambi, A. M. & Wallace, W. (1999). A comparative study of quality practices in higher education institutions in the US and Malaysia. *Total Quality Management,* 10(3), 357-371. Retrieved from www.proquest.com.doi 10.10800954412997884.

Kettis, A., Ring, L., Gustavsson, M. & Wallman, A. (2013). Placements: an underused vehicle for quality enhancement in higher education? *Quality in Higher Education,* 19(1), 28-40. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com. doi:10.1080/13538322.2013.772697.

Kettunen, J. (2008). A conceptual framework to help evaluate the quality of institutional performance. *Quality Assurance in Education,* 16(4), 322-332. Retrieved from www.emeraldinsight.com. doi:10.1108/0984880810906472.

Killen, R. (2010). *Teaching strategies for quality teaching and learning*. Claremont: Juta & Company Ltd.

King, N. (2012). Doing template analysis. In Symon, G. & Cassell, C. (Eds). Qualitative organizational research. Core methods and current challenges (pg 426-450). Los Angeles: SAGE.

Kistan, C. (1999). Quality assurance in South Africa. *Quality Assurance in Education,* 7(3), 125-133. Retrieved from www.emerald.com. doi:10.1108/09684889910281557.

Kleijnen, J., Dolmans, D., Willems, J. & Hout, H. V. (2013). Teacher's conceptions of quality and organizational values in higher education: compliance or enhancement? *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education,* 38(2), 152-166. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com. doi:10.1080/02602938.2011.611590.

Kneale, P. (2009). Teaching and learning for employability. Knowledge is not the only outcome. In H. Fry, S. Ketteridge & S. Marshall (Eds.), *A handbook for teaching and learning in higher education. Enhancing academic practice* (3rd ed) (pp. 99-112). New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group.

Korthagen, F. A. J. & Vasalos, A. (2010). Going to the core; Deepening reflection by connecting the person to the profession (pp 529-552). In N. Lyons (Ed.), *Handbook of reflection and reflective inquiry: Mapping a way of knowing for professional reflective inquiry*. New York: Springer.

Krause, K. (2012). Addressing the wicked problem of quality in higher education: theoretical approaches and implications. *Higher Education Research and Development,* 31(3), 285-297. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com. doi:10.1080/07294360.2011.634381.

Kreber, C. (2010). Academics' identities, authenticity and pedagogy. *Studies in Higher Education*, 35(2), 171-194.

Landrum, R. & Smith, R. (2007). Creating syllabi for statistics and research methods courses. In D. Dunn, R. Smith & B. Beins (Eds.), *Best Practices for Teaching Statistics and Research Methods in the Behavioural Sciences* (pp. 45-57). London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Law, D. C. S. (2010). Quality assurance in post-secondary education: Some common approaches. *Quality Assurance in Education, 18*(1), 64-77. Retrieved from http://www.emeraldinsight.com. doi:10.1108/09684881011016007.

Leedy, P, D. & Ormorod, J.E. (2001). *Practical Research. Planning and Design*. 7th ed. New Jersey: Merrill Prentice Hall.

Leibowitz, B., Bozalek, V., Garraway, J., Herman, N., Jawitz, J., Muhuro, P., Ndebele, C., Quinn, O., van Schalkwyk, S., Vorster, J. &Winberg, C. (2017). *Learning to teach in Higher Education in South Africa. An investigation into the influences of institutional context on the professional learning of academics in their roles as teachers. A*

collaboration between eighteen researchers across eight universities. Higher Education Montor 14. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education.
Lewin, T. L. & Mawoyo, M (2014). Student access and success: Issues and Interventions in South African Universities. *The South African Institute for Advancement Inyathelo*. The Krege Foundation: Cape Town Retrieved from http://kresge.org.
Li, Y. (2010). Quality Assurance in Chinese Higher Education. *Research in Comparative and International Education,* 5(1), 58-76. Retrieved from www.wwwords.uk/RCIE website: doi:10.2304/rcie.2010.5.1.58.
Lia, H., & Hitchcock, J. (2018). Reported credibility techniques in higher education evaluation studies that use qualitative methods: A research synthesis. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 68 (2018), 157-165. Retrieved from https://reader.elsevier.com
Lim, D. (2001). *Quality assurance in higher education. A study of developing countries*. England: Ashgate Publishing Limited.
Lim, D. (2009). Testing the effectiveness of a quality assurance system: the example of Hong Kong. *Journal of Vocational Education and Training,* 61(2), 183-202. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com. doi:10.80/13636820902933247.
Lincolin, Y. S. & Guba, E. G. (2007). But is it rigoruos? Trusthworhiness and authenticity in naturalistic evaluation. In D. D. Williams (Ed.), *Naturalistic evaluation. New directions for program evaluation 30.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
Liu, C. C. & Chen, I. J. (2010). Evolution of constructivism. *Contemporary Issues in Educational Research,* 3(4), 63-66.
Lomas, L. (2007). Zen, motorcycle maintenance and quality in higher education. *Quality Assurance in Education,* 15(4), 402-412. Retrieved from http:www.emeraldinsight.com. doi:10.11087/09684880710829974.
Loots, A. (2008). Programme evaluation: Maintaining quality in higher education. *South African Journal of Higher Education,* 22(6), 1212-1228.
Loots, S., Ts'ephe, L. & Walker, M. (2016). Evaluating black women's participation development and success in doctoral studies: A capabilities perspective. *South African Journal of Higher Education, 30*(2), 110-128. Retrieved from www.journals.ac.za. doi:10.20853/30-2-575.
Luckett, K. (2003, July). *Tensions between fitness of purpose and fitness for purpose: The introduction of a national quality assurance system in South Africa*. Paper presented at the 15th International Conference on Assessing Quality in Higher Education, South Africa, Cape Town. 14-16 July.
Luckett, K. (2006). *The quality assurance of teaching and learning in higher education in South Africa: An analysis of national policy development and stakeholder response.* (Unpublished PhD thesis), University of Stellenbosch. Retrieved from https://scholar.sun.ac.za.
Luckett, K. (2007). The introduction of external quality assurance in South African higher education: An analysis of stakeholder response. *Quality in Higher Education,* 13(2), 97-116. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com. doi:10.1080/13538320701629129.
Luckett, K. (2010). A quality revolution constrained? A critical reflection on quality assurance methodology from the South African Higher Education Context. *Quality in Higher Education,* 16(1), 71-75. doi:10.1080/13538321003679556.
MacAskill, P., Goho, J., Richard, R., Anderson, K. & Stuhldreier. (2008). Creating quality assurance in curriculum: Theory and practice at a Canadian community college. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice, 32(12),* 939-958. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com. doi:10.1080/10668920600859962.

Maguire, K. & Gibbs, P. (2013). Exploring the notion of quality in higher education assessment in a collaborative future. Q*uality in Higher Education, 19*(1), 41-55. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com. doi:10.10 80/1353822.2013.774220.

Maharaj, A. (2012). Some findings on the design and implementation of mathematics tutorials at a university. *South African Journal of Higher Education, 26*(5), 1001-1015.

Makondo, L. (2014). Academic Advising in Universities: Concept Paper. *Journal of Sociology and Social Anthropology, 5*(2), 179-186. Retrieved from www.krepublishers.com.

Makunye, M. M. & Pelser, T. G. (2012). Academic staff's quality apathy towards formal professinal development programms at North-West University. *South African Journal of Higher Education, 26*(3), 529-545.

Mammen, K. J. (2006). Academics' perceptions of 'quality in higher education' and quality strategies. *South African Journal of Higher Education, 20*(5), 639-654.

Manathunga, C., Pitt, R. & Critchley. (2009). Graduate attribute development and employment outcomes: Tracking PhD graduates. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education,* 34(1), 91-103. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com. doi:10.1080/02602930801955945.

Maniku, A. A. (2008). *Higher education quality assurance policy and practice in the Maldives. A case study from a small developing nation.* (Unpublished PhD thesis) Massey University New Zealand. Retrieved from http://mro.massey.ac.nz.

Martens, E. & Prosser, M. (1998). What constitutes high quality teaching and learning and how to assure it. *Quality Assurance in Education,* 6(1), 28-36. Retrieved from www.emeraldinsight.com. doi:10.1108/09684889810200368.

Mårtensson, K., Roxå, T. & Stensaker, B. (2014). From quality assurance to quality practices: an investigation of strong microcultures in teaching and learning. *Studies in Higher Education,* 39(4), 534-545. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com. doi:10.1080/03075079.2012.709493.

Martin, M. (2016). Towards better quality higher education. *University World News,* (00408). Retrieved from www.universityworldnews.com.

Masehela, L. M. (2015). A social realist perspective: A quest for understanding quality practices in higher education. *South African Journal of Higher Education,* 29(2), 144-162. Retrieved from http://reference.sabinet.co.za.

Materu, P. & Righetti, P. (2010). Quality assurance in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Research in Comparative and International Education,* 5(1), 3-17. Retrieved from www.researchgate.net. doi:10.2304/rcie.2010.5.1.3.

Matthews, B. & Ross, L. (2010). *Research Methods. A Practical Guide for the Social Sciences*. England: Pearson Education Limited.

May, T. (2011). *Social Research Issues. Methods and Processes*. Glasgow: McGrawHill Open University Press.

McAdams, D. P. (2012). Exploring psychological themes through life narrative accounts. In J. A. Holstein & J. F Gubrium (Eds.), *Varieties of Narrative Analysis* (pp. 15-32). London: SAGE.

McCulloch, G. (2004). *Documentary Research. In Education, History and the Social Sciences*. London and New York: Routledge Falmer Taylor and Francis Group.

Mcinnis, C. (2000). Changing academic work roles: The everyday realities challenging quality in teaching. *Quality in Higher Education,* 6(2), 143-152. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com. doi:10.1080/713692738.

McKenna, S. (2004). *A Critical Investigation into Discourses that Construct Academic Literacy at the Durban Institute of Technology.* (Unpublished Doctor of Philosophy thesis), Rhodes University, Grahamstown.
McKenna, S. & Powell, P. (2009). 'Only a name change': The move from Technikon to University of Technology. *The Journal of Independent Teaching and Learning, 4(1),* 37-48.
McKenna, S. & Quinn, L. (2012). Lost in translation: Transformation in the first round of institutional audits. *South African Journal of Higher Education, 26*(5), 1033-1044.
McKenna, S (2014). Higher Education Studies as a field of research. *The Independent Journal of Teaching and Learning*, 9 (1), 6-16. Retrieved from https://www.ru.ac.za/teachingandlearning/highereducationstudies/doctoralprogramme/phdinhighereducationstudies/.
McKimm. J. (2009). Teaching quality standards and enhancement. In H. Fry, S Ketteridge, & S. Marshall (Eds), *Handbook for teaching and learning in higher eduation. Enhancing academic practice* (3rd ed) (pp. 186-197). New York: Routledge.
Melin, M., Astvik, W. & Bernhard-Oettel, C. (2014). New work demands in higher education. A study of the relationship between excessive workload, coping strategies and subsequent health among academic staff. *Quality in Higher Education, 20*(3), 230-308. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com. doi:10.1080/13538322.2014.979547.
Melrose, M. (1998). Exploring paradigms of curriculum evaluation and concepts of quality. *Quality in Higher Education, 4*(1), 37-43.
Mentz, P. J. & Mentz, K. (2006). The quality issues at departmental level at a recently merged university. *South African Journal of Higher Education,* 20(1), 105-121.
Mertova, P. & Webster, L. (2009). The academic voice in English and Czeh higher education quality. *Quaity Assurance in Education,* 17(2), 140-155. Retrieved from www.emeraldinsight.com doi:10.1108/09684880910951363.
Meyer, J. W. & Rowan, B. (1977). Institutionalized organisations: Formal structure as myth and ceremony. *American Journal of Sociology*, 83(2), 340-363. Retrieved from http://about.jstor.org/terms.
Mgqwashu, E. M. (2011). Academic literacy in the mother tongue: A pre-requisite for epistemological access. *Alternation,* 18(2), 159-178.
Miller, J. & Glasner, B. (2011). The "inside" and "outside": Finding realities in interviews. In D. Silverman (Ed.), *Qualitative Research. Issues of Theory, Method and Practice* (3rd ed) (pp. 131-148). London: SAGE.
Miller, K. J. & McTavish, D. (2014). *Making and managing public policy*. London: Routledge.
Milligan, L. (2016). Insider-outsider-inbetweener? Researcher positioning, participative methods and cross-cultural educational research. *Compare: A journal of comparative and International Education,* 46(2), 235-250 Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com. doi: 10.1080/03057925.2014.928510.
Ministry of Education (MoE) (2001). National Plan on Higher Education in South Africa. Pretoria: Government Printers
Mkhize, D. E. (2014). Perceptions and practices of curriculum development at universities of technology (previously known as technikons): DUT case study. *South African Journal of Higher Education,* 28(5), 1541-1553. Retrived from https://ir.dut.ac.za/handle/10321/2354.
Mkhize, T. & Cassimjee, R. (2013). A concept analysis of quality assurance and quality enhancement in higher education institutions. *South African Journal of Higher Education, 27(5, 1264-1276.*

Mkhize, D.E. (2016). Perceptions and practices of curriculum development at universities of technology (previously known as technikons): DUT Case study. *South African Journal of Hgher Education*, 28(5), 1541-1553. Retrieved from http://ir.dut.ac.za/handle10321/2354.

Mokhele, M. (2013). Reflections of black women academics at South African Universities: A narrative case study. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences,* 4(3), 611-619. Retrieved from www.mcser.org. doi:10.590/mjss.2013.v4n3p611

Moodly, A. L. & Drake, M. (2016). University Teaching as a Profession: A Holistic Approach to Continuous Development in South African Higher Education Institutions. *International Journal of Educational Sciences,* 14(3), 225-232. Retrieved from www.krepublishers.com.

Moore, S., Armstrong, C. & Pearson, J. (2008). Lecture absenteeism among students in higher education: a valuable route to understanding student motivation. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 30(1), 15-21. Retrived from www.tandfonline.com. doi 10.1080/13600800701457848.

Moraru, L. (2012). Conflicting expectations in terms of quality assurance in teaching and research. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 69 (2012)*, 73-78. Retrieved from www.sciencedirect.com. doi:10.106/j.sbspro.2012.11.384.

Morton, A. (2009). Lecturing to large groups. In H. Fry, S. Ketteridge & S. Marshall (Eds.), *Handbook for teaching and learning in higher education. Enhancing academic practice* (3rd ed.) (pp. 58-71). New York and London: Routledge.

Murdoch, N. & Grobbelaar, J. (2004). Quality assurance of assessment in higher education. In S. Gravett & H. Geyser (Eds.), *Teaching and learning in higher education* (pp. 112-125). Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Nabaho, L., Aguti, J. & Oonyu, J. (2016). Assuring the quality of teaching at Makere University in Uganda: Practices and experiences of academics and students. *Alternation,* 23(1), 40-61. Retrieved from http://utlo.ukzn.ac.za.

Narasimhan, K. (2001). Improving the climate of teaching sessions. The use of evaluations by students and instructors. *Quality in Higher Education,* 7(3), 179-190.

Narismulu, P., & Dhunpath, R. (2011). Editorial: Diversity, transformation and student experience in Higher Education teaching and learning. *Alternation,* 18(2).

National Planning Commission. (2011). *National Development Plan Vision for 2030*. Pretoria: The Republic of South Africa. Retrieved from www.gov.za.

Nduna, N. J. (2012). The relevance of workplace learning in guiding student and curriculum development. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 26(2), 232 – 248.

Neuman, W.L. (2014). Basics of social research: Qualitative & Quantitative approaches. 3rd ed. England: Pearson.

Newton, J. (2002). Barriers to effective quality management and leadership. Case study of two academic departments. *Higher Education, 44*(2), 185-212. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/3447556.

Ngozwana, N (2014). *Understandings of democracy and citizenship in Lesotho: Implicaions for civic education*. (Unpublished PhD thesis), University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

Njoku, P. C. (2012). Quality Assurance situation and capacity building needs in Anglophone West African Countries. In G. B. Alabi & J. C. Mba (Eds.), *The quality assurance situation and capacity-building needs in Anglophone West African Countries. (pp. 17-56).* Ghana: Association of African Universities.

Ntshoe, I., Higgs, P., Wolhuter, C. C. & Higgs, L. G. (2010). Is quality assurance in higher education contextually relative? *South African Journal of Higher Education, 24*(1), 111-131.

Nzimande, B, E. (2014, October). Speech by Minister of Higher Education and Training. *The Seventh Annual International South African Technology Network (SATN) Conference*. Fairmount Zimbali Lodge and Resort, Umhlali, KZN South Africa. 14 October.

Nzimande, B.E. (2015) Budget Speech June 2015. Minister of Higher Education and Training. National Assembly. Department of Higher Education and Training. Retrieved from www.dhet.gov.za.

O'Brien, F. Y. (2010). *Grounding service learning in South Africa: The development of a theoretical framework.* (Unpublished PhD thesis), University of KwaZulu-Natal. Retrieved from http://researchspace.ukzn.ac.za.

Ocham, L. & Okoth, U. (2015). Head-teachers' motivational practices in public secondary schools in Kenya. *The TQM Journal,* 27(6), 814-822. Retrieved from www.emeraldinsight.com. doi:10.1108/TQM-08-2015-0110.

Oliver, M. (2012). Technology and change in academic practice. In P. Trowler, M. Saunders & V. Bamber (Eds.), *Tribes and territories in the 21st century. Rethinking the significance of disciplines in higher education*. (pp. 220-231). London and New York: Routledge.

O'Mahony, K. & Garavan, T. N. (2012). Implementing a quality management framework in a higher education organization. A case study. *Quality Assurance in Education, 20*(2), 184-200. Retrieved from www.emerald.com doi 10.1108/09684881211219767.

Papadimitriou, A. (2010). Looking for clues about quality: A multilevel mixed design on quality management in Greek universities. *The Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods,* 8(2), 85-94. Retrieved from www.ejbrm.com.

Papadimitriou, A. & Westerheijden, D.F (2011). What kind of universities in Greece invited external evaluation (EUA-IEP)? Isomorphic pressures and leadership: the Greek case. *Qualtiy in Higher Education,* 17(2), *195-212.* Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com. doi 10.1080/13538322.2011.582795

Parker, L (2004). Qualitative research. In S. Burton & P. Steane (Eds.). *Surviving your thesis. (pp. 159-177).* London and New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis.

Patsala, P. & Kefalas. P. (2016, June). *The good the bad and the ugly practices in higher education.* Paper presented at the Internatinal conference on education and new developments, Ljubljiana, Slovenia. 12-14 June.

Pavlina, K., Zorica, M. & Pongrac, A. (2011). Student perception of teaching quality in higher education. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences,* 15, 2288-2292. Retrived from www.science. direct.com doi: 10.106/j.sbspro.2011.04.095.

Petty, N.J., Thomson, O.P. & Stew, G. (2012). Ready for a paradigm shift? Part 2: Introducing qualitative research methodologies and methods. *Manual Therapy* 17, 378-384. Retrieved from www.elseveir.com. doi 10.1016/j.math.2012.03.004.

Phillips, E. M. & Pugh, D. S. (2010). *How to get a PhD. A handbook for students and their supervisors* (Fifth edition ed.). England: Open University Press.

Pithouse-Morgan, K., Naicker, I., Masinga, L., Pillay, D. & Hlao, T. (2016). Sink or swim? Learning from stories of becoming academics within a transforming university terrain. *South African Journal of Higher Education,* 30(1), 1-20. Retrieved from www.researchgate.net. doi.org/10.20853/30-1-561.

Pitman, T. (2014). Reinterpreting higher education quality in response to policies of mass education: the Australian experience. *Quality in Higher Education,* 20(3), 348-363. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com. doi.or/10.1080/13538322.2014.957944.

Plater, W. (2013). Toward a transnational framework: aligning internal and external quality assurance processes. *Higher Learning Research Communications, 3*(1), 4-17. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com.

Pons, D. (2014, October). *GPS and Bluetooth used as a tool to monitor student class attendance*. Paper presented at the Seventh Annual South African Technology Network Conference, Fairmont Zimbali Lodge and Resort, Umhali KwaZulu-Natal North Coast Durban South Africa. 14 October.

Pretlow, J. III (2014). Student recruitment into postsecondary educational program. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice,* 38(5), 478-482. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi:10.1080/10668926.2013.790306.

Puŝka, A., Ejubović, A. & Beganović, A. (2016). Student Feedback as a Guideline for Higher Education Quality Enhancement. *EKOHOMHKA*, *62*(4), 39-54. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com. doi:10.5937/ekonomika1604039p.

Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). (2006). UK Higher Education in China: An overview of the quality assurance arrangemnts. Retrived from www.qaa.ac.uk.

Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). (2011). *UK Quality code for higher education. Part B. Assuring and Enhancing Academic Quality. Chapter B7. External Examinining*. Retrieved from www.qaa.ac.uk.

Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). (2012). *UK Quality Code for Higher Education. Part B. Assuring and Enhancing Academic Quality. Chapter B3 Learning and Teaching*. Retrieved from www.qaa.ac.uk.

Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). (2013a). *UK Quality Code for Higher Education. Part B Assuring and Enhancing Academic Quality. Chapter B1. Programme Design, Development and Approval*. Retrieved from www.qaa.ac.uk.

Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). (2013b). *UK Quality Code for Higher Education. Part B Assuring and Enhancing Academic Quality. Chapter B4. Enabling Student Development and Achievement*. Retrieved from www.qaa.ac.uk.

Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). (2013c). UK Quality Code for Higher Education. Part B Assuring and Enhancing Academic Quality. Chapter B7. Assessment of Students and the recognition of prior learning.

Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). (2015). *The Quality Code. A Brief Guide*. Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). Retrieved from www.qaa.ac.uk.

Qu, S. & Dumay, J. (2011). The qualitative research interview. *Qualitative research in Accounting and Management,* (3), 238-264. Retrieved from www.emeraldinsight.com. doi:10.1108/117660911111162070.

Quinn, L. & Boughey, C. (2009). A case study of an institutional audit: A social realist account. *Quality in Higher Education,* 15(3), 263-278.

Ramrathan, L. (2013). Towards a conceptual framework for understanding student dropout from higher education institutions. *South African Journal of Higher Education,* 27(1), 209-220. Retrieved from www.sabinet.com.

Rakes, G. & Dunn, K.I. (2015). Teaching online: Discovering teacher concerns. *Journal of Research on Technology in Eduation*. 47(4), 229-241. Retrieved from www.tandfononline .com. doi: 10.1080/15391523.2015.1063346.

Randle, K. & Brady, N. (1997). Further Education and the New Managerialism. *Journal of Further and Higher Education,* 21(2), 229-239. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi:10.1080/0309877970210208.

Rapley, T. (2011). Some pragmatics of data analysis. In D. Silverman (Ed.), *Qualitative Research Issues of Theory, Method and Practice* (3rd ed) (pp. 273-290). London: SAGE.

Redmond, R., Curtis, E., Noone, T. & Keenan, P. (2008). Quality in higher education. The contribution of Edward Deeming's principles. *International Journal of Educational Management,* 22(5), 432-441. Retrieved from www.emerald.com.

Reddy, T (2008). Staff perceptions of the merger between two South African regional technikons. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 21(3), 485-502

Reitsma, G, M. & van Hamburg, E. (2013). Panel members' experience of peer evaluation of teaching practice. *Proceedings of the Higher Education Learning and Teaching Association of Southern Africa* (HELTASA), 27-29 November 2013. UNISA South Africa, Pretoria.

Republic of South Africa (RSA) (1997). Government Gazette No 18515. The Higher Education Act No 101. Cape Town: Republic of South Africa.

Ridley, D. (2012). *The Literature Review. A Step-by-Step guide for Students* (2nd ed.). Los Angeles: SAGE.

Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., Elam, G., Tennant, R. & Rahim, N. (2014). Designing and selecting samples. In J. Ritchie, J. Lewis, C. M. Nicholls & R. Ormston (Eds.), *Qualitative research practice* (Second ed) (pp. 111-145). London: National Centre for Social Research.

Ritchie, J. & Ormston, R. (2014). The applications of qualitative methods to social research. In J. Ritchie, J. Lewis, C. M. Nicholls & R. Ormston (Eds.), *Qualitative research practice. A guide for social science students and researchers* (Second ed) (pp. 27-46). London: National Centre for Social Research.

Rosa, M. J., Saricco, C. S. & Amaral, A. (2012). Academics' perceptions on the purposes of quality assessment. *Quality in Higher Education*, 18(3), 349-366. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com. doi:10.1080/13538322.2012.733550.

Rubin, H. J. & Rubin, I. S. (2012). *Qualitative Interviews. The Art of Hearing Data* (3rd ed.). London: SAGE.

Rule, P. & John, V. (2011). *Your Guide to Case Study Research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Saarinen, T. (2010). What I talk about when I talk about quality. *Quality in Higher Education*, *16*(1), 55-57.

Sandmaung, M. & Khang, D. B. (2013). Quality expectations in Thai higher education institutions: Multiple stakeholder perspectives. *Quality Assurance in Education, 21*(3), 260-281. Retrieved from www.emeraldinsight.com/0968-4883 doi:10.1108/QAE-11-2012-0044.

Sari, A., Firat, A. & Karaduman, A. (2016). Quality assurance issues in higher education sectors of developing countries: case of Northern Cyprus. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences,* 229 (2016), 326-334. Retrieved from www.siencedirect.com. doi. Org/10.10161/jsbspro.2016.07.143.

Sattar, K. & Cooke, L. A. (2012). A conceptual framework for the quality assurance of programme design at the Durban University of Technology. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 26(2), 372-390.

Saunders, M. (2012). Imperatives for academic practices catalysts for sustained change. In P. Trowler, M. Saunders & V. Bamber (Eds.), *Tribes and territories in the 21st century. Rethinking the significance of disciplines in higher education*. (pp. 169-185). London and New York: Taylor Francis Group.

Schindler, L., Puls-Elvidge, S., Welzant, H. & Crawford, L. (2015). Definitions of quality in higher education: A synthesis of the literature. *Higher Learning and Research Communications,* 5(3), 3-13. Retrieved from www.hlrc.journal.com doi:10.18870/hlrc.v5i3.244.

Scott, G. (2013). Improving learning-and-teaching quality in higher education. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 27(2), 275-294. Retrieved from http://reference.sabinet.co.za doi 10.20853/27-2-247.

Scott, I., Yeld, N. & Hendry, J. (2007). A case for Improving Teaching and Learning in South African Higher Education. *Higher Education Monitor Number 6*. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education. Retrieved from www.che.ac.za.

Scott, P. (2017) Policy process in Higher Education. In J, C. Shin & P. Teixeira. (eds)*Encyclopedia of International Higher Education Systems and Institutions* (pp.1-4).. Retrieved from www.scholargoogle.com.

Seema, R., Udam, M. & Mattisen, H. (2016). Attitudes of academic staff towards their own work and towards external evaluation, from the perspective of self-determination theory: Estonian case. *Quality in Higher Education*, 22(2), 117-126. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com. doi 10.1080/13538322.2016.1195967.

Sehoole, M.T.C. (2005). The politics of mergers in higher education in South Africa. *Higher Education*, 50, 159-179.

Selesho, J. (2006). The historical perspectives of quality assurance in South African higher education institution. *Interdisciplinary Journal, 5*(1), 55-61. Retrieved from www.cut.ac.za.

Selesho, J. M. (2014). Academic staff retention as a human resource factor: University perspective. *International Business & Economics Research Journal, 13*(2) 295-304. Retrieved from www.cluteinstitute.com.

Sentilkumar, N. & Arulraj, A. (2011). SQM-HEI-Determination of service quality measurement of higher education in India. *Journal of Modelling in Management, 6*(1), 60-78. Retrieved from www.emeraldinsight.com. doi:10.1108/174656611111112502.

Shah, M. & Jarzabkowski, L. (2013). The Australian higher education quality assurance framework. *Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher Education, 17*(3), 96-106. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com. doi:10.1080/13603108.2013.794168.

Shaikh, S., Memon, Z. & Shah, A. (2017). Adoption and impact of quality assurance processes in higher education institutions of Jamshoro education city. *Biannual Research Journal Grassroot,* (Special Issue), 220-235. Retrieved from www.googlescholar.com.

Shalem, Y., Allais, S. & Steinberg, C. (2004). Outcomes-based quality assurance: What do we have to lose? *Journal of Education, 34 (1),* 51-78.

Shanahan, P. & Gerber, R. (2004). Quality in university student administration: Stakeholder conceptions. *Quality Assurance in Education,* 12(4), 166-174. Retrieved from www.emerald.com. doi:10.1108/09684880410567578.

Sikhwari, T. D., Maphosa, C., Masehela, L. M. & Ndebele, C. (2015). Exploring students's views on factors affecting performance in a South African University. *International Journal of Educational Science,* 10(3), 4442-4450. Retrieved from www.researchgate.net. doi 10.1080/09751122.2015.11890367.

Silverman, D (2011). Qualitative research issues of theory, method and practice. (Third ed.). London: SAGE.

Silverman, D. (2013). *Doing qualitative research* (Fourth ed.). London: SAGE.

Singh, M. (2010). Quality assurance in higher education: Which pasts to build on, what futures to contemplate? *Quality in Higher Education,* 16(2), 189-194. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com website: doi:10.1080/13538322.2010.485735.

Skare, R. (2009). Complementarity - a concept for document analysis? *Journal of Documentation,* 65(5), 834-840. Retrieved from www.emeraldinsight.com. doi:10.1108.00220410910983137.

Skolnik, M. (2010). Quality assurance in higher education as a political process. *Higher Education Management and Policy,* 22(1), 1-20. Retrieved from www.researchgate.net. doi:10.178hemp-225kmlh5gs3zr0.

Smith, B., & McGannon, K. (2018). Developing rigor in qualitative research: problems and opportunities within sport and exercise psychology. *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 11(1), 101-121. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com. doi: 10.1080/1750984X.2017.1317357

Sokoli, D. & Koren, A. (2017, May). Qualifications of lecturers as indicator of quality teaching in Higher Education. *Management Challenges in a Network Economy*, International Conference 17-19 May. Lublin, Poland.

South African University of Technology (SAUT). (2006). *Experiential Learning Policy*.

South African University of Technology (SAUT). (2007). *Staff Induction policy*.

South African University of Technology (SAUT). (2008). *Assessment Policy*.

South African University of Technology (SAUT). (2009a). *Quality Assurance Policy*.

South African University of Technology (SAUT). (2009b). *Undergraduate Admissions Policy*.

South African University of Technology (SAUT). (2009c). *Strategic Goals and objectives for 2009-2018 and Strategic Directions 2008-2012*.

South African University of Technology (SAUT) (2010). *Project Plan: Curriculum Renewal at…*

South African University of Technology (SAUT). (2013a). *Quality Guidelines and Procedures*.

South African University of Technology (SAUT). (2013b). *Academic Staff Promotions Policy*.

South African University of Technology (SAUT). (2014). *Assessment Policy*.

South African University of Technology (SAUT). (2015). *Strategic Plan 2015-2019*.

South African University of Technology (SAUT). (n.d). *Guidelines for Teaching and Learning*.

Spencer, L., Ritchie, J., O'Connor, W., Morell, G. & Ormston, R. (2014). Analysis in practice. In J. Ritchie, J. Lewis, C. M. Nicholls & R. Ormston (Eds.), *Qualitative research practice. A guide for students and researchers* (Second Ed) (pp. 297-345) London: NatCen National Centre for Social Research.

Stander, E. & Herman, C. (2017). Barriers and challenges private higher education institutions face in the management of quality assurance in South Africa. South African Journal of Higher Education, 31(5), 206-224. Retrieved from www.journals.ac.za doi 10.28535/31-5-1481.

Stefant, L. (2009). Planning teaching and learning. Curriculum design and development. In H. Fry, S. Ketteridge & S. Marshall (Eds.), *A Handbook for teaching and learning in higher education. Enhancing academic practice* (3rd ed.) (pp. 40-57). New York and London: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group.

Steyn, M., Harris, T. & Hartell, T. (2014). Institutional factors that affect black South African students' perceptions of early childhood teacher education. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 34(3), 1-7. Retrieved from www.sajournalofeducation.co.za.

Strydom, A. H. & Strydom, J. F. (2004). Establishing quality assurance in the South African context. Q*uality in Higher Education*, 10(2), 101-113.

Strydom, J., Basson & Mentz, M. (2012). Enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. *Using Student Engagement Data to Establish a Culture of Evidence*. Retrieved from www.che.ac.za.

Strydom, J. F. & Mentz, M. (2010). *South African survey of student engagement. Focusing the student experience on success through student engagement*. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education. Retrieved from www.che.ac.za.

Suarman, Z. A. & Yasin, R. M. (2013). The quality of teaching and learning towards the satisfaction among the university students. *Asian Social Science,* 9(12), 252-260. Retrieved from www.ccsenet.org doi:10.55391ass.v9n12p252.

Subbaye, R. & Vithal, R. (2015). Teaching criteria that matter in university academic promotions policy. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 42(1), 37-60 Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com. doi:10.1080/02602938.2015.1082533.

Sutherland, L. (2007). Policy pragmatics and problems in quality in higher education. *Perspectives in Education,* 25(3), 1-11. Retrieved from www.reference.sabinet.co.za

Symes, A. (2006). Democratisation and quality assurance in South African higher education. *South African Journal of Higher Education,* 20(6), 762-772.

Tadesse, T. (2014). Quality assurance in Ethopian higher education: Boon or bandwagon in light of quality improvement? *Journal of Higher Education in Africa,* 12(2), 131-157. Retrieved from www.codesria.org.

Tam, M. (2001). Measuring quality and performance in higher education. *Quality in Higher Education,* 7(1), 47-54.

Tang, S. F. & Hussin, S. (2013). Advancing sustainability in private higher education through quality assurance. A study of two Malaysian private universities. *Asian Social Science,* 9(11), 1911-2025 Retrieved from www.ccsenet.org doi 10.5539/assv911270.

Taylor, J. (2009). National monitoring of higher education: Motives, methods and means. In M. Tight, K. H. Mok, J. Huisman & C. C. Morphew (Eds.), *The Routledge International Handbook of Higher Education.* (pp. 225-242), London: Routledge.

Technical Committee on Accreditation and Certification, SADC (2012). Quality Assurance Situation and Capacity Builing Needs in Southern African Countries: Towards a framework for improvement of quality assurance systems in member states. In G. B. Alabi & J. C. Mba (Eds.), *The quality assurance situation and capacity-building needs in Anglophone West African Countries. (pp. 155-183).* Ghana: Association of African Universities.

Teng, C., Horng, J. & Baum, T. (2013). Academic perceptions of quality and quality assurance in undergraduate hospitality, tourism and leisure programmes: A comparison of UK and Taiwanese programmes. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education, 13*, 233-243. Retrieved from www.sciencedirect.com doi:10.1016/j.jhlste.2012.06.002.

The Australian Higher Education System. (2014). Group of Eigh Australia. The Australian Higher Education System. Retrieved from https://go8.edu.au/page/australian-higher-educatin-system.

Thomas, G. (2009). *How to do your research project. A guide for students in Education and Applied Social Sciences*. London: SAGE.

Thomas, G. (2011). *How to do your case study. A guide for students and researchers*. Los Angeles: SAGE.

Tietze, S. (2012). Researching you own organisation. In Symon, G. & Cassell, C. (Eds). Qualitative organizational research. *Core methods and current challenges* (pp 53-71).Los Angeles: SAGE.

Tinto, V. (2003, November). *Promoting student retention through classroom practice*. Paper presented at Enhancing student retention: Using International Policy and Practice. An international conference sponsored by European Access Network and Institute for Access Studies, Staffordshire University Amsterdam. November 5-7.

Tinto, V. (2008). When access is not enough. *Carnegie Perspectives*. Retrieved from http://files.eric.ed.gov\fulltext\ED502271.

Tinto, V. (2012). Enhancing student success: Taking the classroom success seriously. *The International Journal of Firsty Year in Higher Education, 3*(1), 1-8. Retrieved from https://fyhejournal.com. doi 10.5204/intjfyhe.v2i1.119.

Tohidi, H. & Jabbari, M. (2012). The effects of motivation in education. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences, 31* (2012), 820-824. Retrieved from www.sciencedirect.com. doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.12.148.

Toni, N. & Makura, A. H. (2015). Using reflective practice for a more humane higher education. *South African Journal of Higher Education, 29*(3), 42-55. Retrieved from www.sabinet.co.za.

Too, E. K., Chepchieng, M. C. & Ochola, J. (2015). Effect of academic staff retention on quality education in private universities in Kenya. *Problems of education in the 21st century,* 64 (2015), 86-94. Retrieved from www.scientiasocialist.com.

Tratnik, A., Urh, M. & Jereb, E. (2017). Student satisfaction with an online and face-to-face Business English course in a higher education context. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, 1-10. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com. doi: 10.1080/14703297.2017.1374875.

Tsinidou, M., Gerogiannis, V. & Fitsilis, P. (2010). Evaluation of the factors that determine quality in higher education: an empirical study. *Quality Assurance in Education, 18*(3), 227-244. doi:10.1108/096848810111058669.

Turner, D, W., III (2010) Qualitative interview design: A practical guide for notive investigators. *The Qualitative report*, 15(3), 754-760. Retrieved from www.nova.edu.

Universities South Africa (USAf). (2015). *Consumer Protection Act. Guidelines for Higher Education Institutions*. Retrieved from www.uct.ac.za.

Urquhart, C. (2013). *Grounded theory for qualitative research: A practical guide*. London: SAGE.

Vajocziki, S., Fenton, N., Mernard, K. & Pollon, D. (2011). *Teaching-Stream Faculty in Ontario Universities*. Retrieved from www.heqco.ca . Canada: Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario.

van der Merwe (2008). *The higher education and labour market expectations and experiences of students and graduates. A case study of Durban University of Technology, Pietermaritzburg.* (Unpublished PhD thesis), University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban.

Van Laren, L. & Goba, B. (2013). Volatile issues of language of instruction in foundation phase mathematics teacher education in a multilingual context. *Alternation Special Edition, 9*, 169-196. Retrieved from www.utlo.ukzn.ac.za.

Van Rensburg, W. & Lamberti, P. (2004). The languages of learning and teaching in higher education. In S. Gravett & H. Geyser (Eds.), *Teaching and Learning in Higher education* (pp. 67-87). Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Vazquez, D. (2014). Reflections on tutoring ancient Greek philosophy: A case study of teaching first year undergraduates in the UK, studying teacher education. *A Journal of Self-study of Teacher Education Practices,* 10(2), 117-129. doi:10.1080/17425964.23014.916204.

Venter, P. A. & Bezuidenhout, M. J. (2008). A mechanism for programme evaluation in higher education. *South African Journal of Higher Education,* 22(5), 1114-1125.

Vidovich, L., Fourie, M., Alt, H., Van der Westhuizen, L. & Holtzhausen, S. (2000). Quality teacing and learning in Australian and South African Universities: Comparing policies and practices. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 30(2), 193-209. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com. doi 10.1080/713657455.

Vithal, R. & Jansen, J. (2010). Designing your first research proposal. A manual for researcher in education and the social sciences. Juta & Company: Claremont

Vithal, R. (2016). Growing a scholarship of teaching and learning institutionally. *Studies in Higher Education*, 43(3), 468-483. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com. doi:10.1080/03075079.2016.1180350.

Wadee, A. A. & Cliff, A. (2016). Pre-admission tests of learning potential as predictors of academic success of first-year medical students. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 30(2), 264-278. Retrieved from www.journals.co.za. doi:10.20853/30-2-619.

Wahlen, S. (2002). Teaching skills and academic rewards. *Quality in Higher Education, 8*(1), 81-87.

Walliman, N. (2011). *Your research project: Designing and planning your work*. Los Angeles: SAGE.

Watty, K. (2002). *Quality in Higher Education: The Missing Academic Perspective*. Paper presented at the The 2002 Australasian Association for Institutional Research Forum. www.aair.org.au.

Watty, K. (2006). Want to know about quality in higher education? Ask an academic. *Quality in Higher Education,* 12(3), 291-301.

Webbstock, D. J. (2008). *A conceptual exploration of academic freedom and institutional autonomy in South African higher education: Postmodernism globalization and quality assurance.* (Unpublished PhD thesis), University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

Webster, S., Lewis, J. & Brown, A. (2014). Ethical considerations in qualitative research. In J. Ritchie, J. Lewis, C. M. Nicholls & R. Ormston (Eds.). *Qualitative Research Practice. A guide for social science students and researchers* (pp. 77-110). London: NatCen National Centre for Social Research.

Wei-ping, L. & Shuo, Z. (2010). Development on quality assurance of teaching and learning. *Management Science and Engineering*, 4(2), 62-68. Retrieved from www.csanada.net.

Williams, K. (2008). Troubling the concept of the 'academic profession' in the 21st century higher education. *Higher Education, 56 (5),* 533-544.

Williams, J. (2016). Quality assurance and quality enhancement: is there a relationship? Q*uality in Higher Education*, *22*(2), 97-102. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com website: doi:10.1080/13538322.2016.1227207.

Woldegiorgis, E.T (2013). Conceptualizing harmonization of higher education systems: The application of regional integration theories on higher education studies. *Higher Education Studies*, 3(2) 12-23. Retrieved from www.sciencedirect.com. Date Accessed 30 May 2017.

Wood, N. & Maistry, S. (2014). Professional accounting associations' influence on higher education accounting pedagogy. *Alternation,* Special Edition (12), 198-239.

Wright, J. (2007). Reframing quality and impact: The place of theory in education research. *The Australian Educational Researcher*, *35*(1), 1-16. https://search.proquest.com.

Yang, S. & Zheng, L. (2011). The paradox of de-coupling: A study of flexible work program and workers' productivity. *Social Science Research*, 40 (1), 299-311. Retrieved from www.elsevier.com. 10.1016/j.ssresearch.2010.04.005.

Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research. Design and Methods* (Third ed.). Thousand Oaks: SAGE.

Yin, R. K. (2012). *Applications of case study research* (Third ed.). Los Angeles: SAGE.

Zaki, S. & Rashidi, M, Z. (2013). Parameters of quality in Higher Education: A theoretical framework. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Education* 3(4), 1098-1105. Retrieved from http://ijsse.com/sites/default/files/issues/2013/v3i4/papers/Paper-24.pdf.

Zerihun, Z., Beishuizen, J & van Os, W. (2011). Conceptions and practices in teaching and learning: Implications for the evaluation of teaching quality. *Quality in Higher Education* 17(2) 151-161. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi 10.1080/13538322.2011.582793.

Zimitat, C. (2006). *Improving quality of teaching is part of improving retention: A study of first year students in an Australian university.* Paper presented at the FYHE Conference 2006, Queensland University of Technology.

Zou, Y., Du, X. & Rasmussen, P. (2012). Quality of higher education: organizational or educational? A content analysis of Chinese university self-evaluation reports. *Quality in Higher Education,* 18(2), 169-184. Retrieved from www.tandfonline.com doi:10.1080/1358322.2012.708247.

APPENDICES

Appendix A EXPECTED PRACTICES AT NATIONAL LEVEL

EXPECTED PRACTICE	**NATIONAL DOCUMENTS**								
	A Framework for Improving Teaching and Learning Project (CHE, 2001b)	Criteria for MBA Accreditation Manual (CHE, 2003)	Criteria for Programme Accreditation (CHE, 2004a)	Criteria for Institutional Audits (CHE, 2004b)	Teaching and Learning Resources (CHE, 2004c)	Criteria for BED Programme (CHE, 2006)	A Framework for Qualification Standards in HE (CHE, 2011)	White paper on post secondary education (DHET, 2013)	Framework for the QEP Project (CHE, 2014)
Programme design	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Teaching practices	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Assessment	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Staff support and Professional development	√	√	√	√	√	√	x	√	√
Student support	√	√	√	√	√	√	x	x	√
Peer evaluation	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Student enrolment	√	√	√	√	√	√	x	√	√
Student evaluation of teaching	√	x	x	x	√	√	x	x	x
Reviews and evaluations	√	x	√	√	x	x	x	x	x

Appendix B EXPECTED PRACTICES AT INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

EXPECTED PRACTICE	**INSTITUTIONAL DOCUMENTS**										
	Experiential Learning Policy (SAUT, 2006)	Staff Induction Policy (SAUT, 2007)	Assessment Policy (SAUT, 2008)	Quality Assurance Policy (SAUT, 2009a)	Undergraduate Student admissions Policy (SAUT, 2009b)	Quality Guidelines and Procedures (2013a)	Academic Staff Promotions policy (SAUT, 2013b)	New Assessment Policy (SAUT, 2014)	SAUT Strategic goals and Objectives (SAUT, 2009c)	Strategic Plan (SAUT 2015)	Teaching Guidelines (SAUT, n.d)
Staff support and professional development	X	√	√	√	x	√	√	x	√	√	√
Programme design	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	x	√	√
Teaching strategies	√	√	x	x	x	√	√	X	√	√	√
Peer evaluation	√	x	√	√	x	√	√	√	x	x	√
Assessment	x	√	√	x	x	√	√	√	x	x	√
Student support	√	√	x	√	√	√	√	x	x	x	√
Student evaluation of teaching	X	x	x	√	x	√	√	x	x	x	x
Student enrolment	X	x	X	x	√	√	x	x	x	√	x
Reviews and evaluations	X	x	x	√	x	√	x	√	x	x	x
AQM	√	X	x	√	x	√	x	x	x	x	x

Appendix C

GENERAL INFORMATION PROFILE FORM

Gender……

Age……

Race……

Position……

Faculty……

Department……

Discipline……

Number of years in the institution……

Highest qualification……

Appendix D

Informed Consent form given to participants

CONSENT FORM

University of KwaZulu-Natal
School of Education

Phd Research Project

Cynthia Khethiwe Dongwe (Researcher)

Professor R Vithal (Main Supervisor)

Dr F O'Brien (Co-supervisor)

CONSENT

I……. (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this individual interview and the nature of this research project. I consent to participating in this study. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time should I so desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

…….

DATE

……

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

Title: Quality practices in teaching by academics in higher education

Dear Participant

I am registered for a PhD in Higher Education Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, School of Education. You are invited to participate in this research. I believe this study will provide an opportunity for higher education practitioners to reflect on teaching with particular reference to quality in teaching and on the use of quality processes to assure and enhance quality. The results of this study will contribute to the understanding of how quality is understood and enacted by academics in higher education.

If you choose to take part in this study, you will be required to participate in a 45 minute semi-structured individual interview which will be conducted at your office at your earliest convenience. I would appreciate it if you can give me an indication of our availability between June and July 2013.

Your participation is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time with no negative consequences to yourself. The data obtained from the interview will be used purely for the purposes of this PhD study. Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained at all times.

Please note that you will be required to sign a consent form during our interview. This will serve as an indication of your willingness to participate in the study. I will be contacting you shortly.

Thank you

Khethiwe Dongwe (Mrs)

I can be contacted on Ext 8898 should you have any questions regarding this study. Alternatively my main supervisor is Professor Renuka Vithal and she can be contacted on vithalr@ukzn.ac.za or 031 260 8231

Appendix E

Gatekeeper's permission (some text deleted to protect the identity of the institution)

……. UNIVERSITY *of* TECHNOLOGY

Directorate for Research and ……..

29th November 2012

Ms C. K. Dongwe
clo School of Education
College of Humanities University of Kwa-Zulu Natal

Dear Ms Dongwe

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT THE ……

Your email correspondence dated 1st November 2012 in respect of the above refers. I am pleased to inform you that the Institutional Research Committee (IRC) will grant permission to you to conduct your research at …….. University of Technology. However, kindly note that the committee requires you to provide proof of ethical clearance prior to you commencing with your research at the ……...

We would be grateful if a summary of your key research findings can be submitted to the IRC on completion of your studies.

Kindest regards.
Yours sincerely

~.

…… DIRECTOR: RESEARCH MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (ACTING)

APPENDIX F

Ethical clearance letter

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

8 April 2013

Mrs Cynthia Khethiwe Dongwe 203515584
School of Education
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Mrs Dongwe

Protocol reference number: HSS/0190/013D
Project title: Quality practices in teaching by academics' in Higher Education

EXPEDITED APPROVAL

I wish to inform you that your application has been granted Full Approval through an expedited review process.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

.....
Professor Steven Collings (Chair)

/pm

cc Supervisor: Professor Renuka Vithal, Dr Frances O'Brien & Dr Lumkelo Lalendle
cc Academic Leader: Dr MN Davids
cc School Admin.: Miss Bongekile Bhengu

Appendix G

Interview Schedule for academics
Semi-structured individual interviews

1. What are your views about quality with particular reference to teaching in this institution?
   PROBE:
   Would you like your family member to study in this institution?

2. Do you think your views about quality in this institution have changed over the years? or they have stayed the same?
   PROBE:
   How so?

3. What is your understanding of quality?

4. How do you ascertain quality in teaching? How do you know your teaching is of quality?

5. What do you do in practice in order to know if your teaching is of quality? Do you have instruments you are currently using to assure and enhance quality in your particular subjects? Is there something you do specifically?

   PROBES:
   If not, please describe to me why you don't?
   If yes, please describe to me what you do? Can you explain it?

6. When do you do what you have described to me? How often?

   PROBE:
   During your teaching, once a week, once a month, once a term or at the end of the semester or year?

7. Tell me more about the instruments you use

8. Please tell me about the Annual Quality Monitoring (AQM) process which was introduced in 2010 in this institution.
   PROBE:
   Have you been compiling module reports at the end of each semester or year as stated in the policy?
   If not, please describe to me why?

If yes, please describe to me what you do? Can you explain it?

9. The compilation of the AQM report, is it a departmental effort or an individual effort?

10. Do you administer institutional student evaluation forms as stated in the policy? (the SEQs and the LEQs)?

11. When and how are these evaluations conducted?

12. What makes it easy or difficult to administer the SEQs and LEQs?
    PROBE:
    Please share with me your personal problems associated with administering these.

13. Does your HoD inform you when to conduct student evaluations? Can you comment about the HoD involvement in facilitating quality in teaching?

14. Tell me about the faculty involvement in issues of quality in teaching

15. Tell me more about the report you receive from the Quality Unit after you have administered the student evaluations?

16. How else do you know what your students think about your teaching?

17. What you have described to me today, is this a usual way of enhancing and assuring quality in your department? In your faculty? Or it is your own personal decision?
    PROBE:
    How did you know you had to do what you have described to me?

18. Can you provide me with reasons for doing what you have described to me?

    PROBES:
    Do you do these, because you are interested in reflecting on your own practice? OR you do these because the department, faculty and institution requires you to do so?

19. What motivates you to practice quality?

20. What do you then do with the information you receive from all these eg student evaluations, lecturer evaluations, …….,……,……,AQM reports?

21. Are the any problems you experience in trying to assure and enhance quality in teaching?

22. In your view, how useful or not useful are these processes in reflecting on your teaching?

23. In your view, whose responsibility is it to ensure that there is quality in teaching?

24. Is there anything you would like to share with me regarding quality in teaching? Anything you feel have left out?

25. Would you be comfortable to share with me any document you use to assure and enhance quality?

APPENDIX H

A list of documents obtained from academics

Albert	Completed subject evaluation form report
Brian	AQM report Completed lecturer evaluation form Analysis of test results
Celiwe	AQM report
Edith	AQM report
Fana	
Gilberto	Old study guide (compiled by his predecessor) New study guide (compiled by him)
Haizel	Reflective notes Feedback to students on SEQs and LEQs E-mail sent to me after the interview
Isaac	Induction reflection paper Analysis of test results
Jane	Tutorial solutions